Abstract for Each of the MaCoTra Seven-CHORUS-Article CHAIN

This article has its genesis in my doctoral study with the University of South Africa's (UNISA) School of Business Leadership (SBL) from 2001 to 2003. An electronic version of the thesis is available on the UNISA Institutional Repository. Twelve (12) books have since been self-published – four (4) in 2011, seven (7) in 2012 and one (1) in 2013. Seventeen (17) articles, derived from the study, are available on the University of Zimbabwe Institutional Repository since 2013.

The overarching lens for all works is the Madzivire Collaborative Transformation (MaCoTra) model developed during my UNISA study. The MaCoTra model is based on the metaphor of seven (7) CHORUSES. Each of the model CHORUSES constitutes one (1) book of the MaCoTra Seven-CHORUS-Book CHAIN, self-published in 2012, and an article forming the MaCoTra Seven-CHORUS-Article CHAIN. The structure of each of the 7 articles is meant to ease referencing across the Seven-CHORUS-Article CHAIN. Article 1 covers new insights on CHORUS 1, Article 2 on CHORUS 2, Article 3 on CHORUS 3, Article 4 on CHORUS 4, Article 5 on CHORUS 5, Article 6 on CHORUS 6 and Article 7 on CHORUS 7.

Having made a random selection of thirteen (13) private sector, eleven (11) public sector and eleven (11) civic sector organisations for inclusion in the Seven-CHORUS-Article CHAIN and Seven-CHORUS-Book CHAIN, I documented my experiences in applying each CHORUS in these organisations from 2003 to 2012. I relied heavily on documents that I accessed and/or created during my consulting assignments. After a sector based analysis, I have included major reflections that I consider relevant in understanding the dynamics at play for each CHORUS. In some cases, I have also leaned on ‘words of wisdom’ from thought leaders to spice the reflections.

I believe that the organisations sampled reflected polar types in the way they engaged in CHORUS 4. Of course, there have been discords particularly when some organisational members did not fully cuddle in CHOIR or CHORUS practice.

I trust that the Seven-CHORUS-Article CHAIN will energise those scholars/practitioners who have been questioning how to apply the MaCoTra model. This preface is a MODIFIED MELODY to suit each of the 7 Articles, much like a CHORUS!!!

This article features new insights on; and a generic framework for SINGING; MaCoTra CHORUS 4: Collaborative Development of Distinctive Promises.

1.0 Introduction

The overarching frame for this article is the Madzivire Collaborative Transformation (MaCoTra) model (Exhibit 1). The MaCoTra model is also reflected in my 2011 book publication entitled MaCoTra Singing ORGANISATIONS THAT TRANSFORM: ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES in the Emerging Economy of Zimbabwe and each book of the Seven-CHORUS-Book CHAIN self-published in 2012.

Outlining the CHORUS-based MaCoTra model differentiating features, I indicate:

The MaCoTra model encapsulates the transformation song composed of seven CHORUSES for the organizational choir.

Each CHORUS may be sung on its own and also in combination with any one or more of the other CHORUSES. This means an organization may transform as a result of work on one or more CHORUSES.

Further, from a systems perspective, each CHORUS is a subsystem of suprasystem - the total MaCoTra model. In this regard, whatever is done to any one of the CHORUS subsystems affects the other subsystems and has an effect on the suprasystem.
What the MaCoTra model advocates is for each organizational member to go beyond singing individual CHORUSES. MaCoTra invites all organizational members to synchronize the CHORUSES resulting in a melodious overarching organizational choir – the transformation itself.

The MaCoTra colour coding stresses that diversity has to be celebrated as part of organizational transformation.

What a way to celebrate it through any combination of the seven MaCoTra song CHORUSES, and dance!

I also prescribe the MaCoTra Model for companies in Zimbabwe.

Sources: Madzivire (2003) & Madzivire (2011:76)

Exhibit 1: The Madzivire Collaborative Transformation (MaCoTra) Model

This article is the FOURTH of a Seven-CHORUS-Article CHAIN (Exhibit 2), related to MaCoTra CHORUS 4: COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTINCTIVE PROMISES.

Exhibit 2: The MaCoTra Seven-CHORUS-Article Chain

The article is a ‘Symphony of the MaCoTra CHORUS 4 Experiences in the Three Sectors from 2003 to 2012’ in which I summarise the major experiences I had applying MaCoTra CHORUS 4. In this CHORUS 4 article, I provide further insights on this CHORUS given what I covered in my doctoral thesis and subsequent publications. Organisations, some places/features/products/services and participants have been code-named...
for anonymity. Where experiences have been drawn from the same organisation, its code name has been retained throughout the Seven-CHORUS-Article CHAIN. This is meant for those readers who are interested in appreciating the interfaces in experiences in that organisation across some or all of the seven (7) MaCoTra CHORUSES.

1.1 An Overview of CHORUS 4

Explaining the seven (7) MaCoTra model CHORUSES, this is what I said in my earlier work in connection with CHORUS 4:

As highlighted under CHORUS 1 and CHORUS 2, the idea of distinctiveness in promises revolves around being one step ahead of competitors through the use of one aspect from the staff/business stakeholder wish list each time a competitor catches up.

Staff need to participate fully in translating needs and expectations from staff into distinctive promises to staff. The same would apply for the development of business stakeholder promises.

Each promise should also have an accompanying song highlighting its distinctiveness.

It is critically important that selected staff and business stakeholders validate the distinctiveness of the respective promises. Staff and business stakeholders always relate to what they helped create.


1.2 Rhythm of the MaCoTra CHORUS 4 Experiences in Private Sector Organisations

Of the three sectors, CHORUS 4 was most demanded in private sector organisations. As the years progressed from 2003 to 2012, organisations were moving towards the creation of scorecard-perspective-based strategic themes. This brought the key result areas (KRAs) into sharper focus.

The learning & growth perspective was named differently-learning & growth/staff/employee/people perspective. The most favoured was the last. The financial perspective was also called shareholder/board/collaborating partners/funding partners perspective. The most preferred was the financial perspective. The customer perspective was named as customer/supplier/communities/external perspective. I prefer the term external as differentiated from internal dealing with processes and systems.

There was general convergence in KRAs for the people as well as the financial perspective. The common KRAs in the internal perspective were limited. The greatest divergence in KRAs was in the external perspective.

1.3 Rhythm of the MaCoTra CHORUS 4 Experiences in Public Sector Organisations

All organisations whose mandates had roots in an Act of Parliament admitted there had been disconnections in their previous strategies in that the strategies were dislocated from the Acts. Cursory looks, if any, had resulted in organisations becoming creative and wandering off their mandates. A detailed discussion of the duties/functions given in the Act helped in role definition and alignment of values to the mandate.
There was deep multi-stakeholder engagement in three public sector organisations. In the rest, there were variations in terms of depth of engagement, from superficial to intense. Quite a number decided that there would be an added advantage by agreeing scorecard perspective strategic themes. This focused the KRAs even more.

What was loud and clear was that the collaborative development of distinctive promises had to be in sync with the strategic themes and KRAs in service scorecards and strategy maps.

1.4 Rhythm of the MaCoTra CHORUS 4 Experiences in Civic Sector Organisations

A significant number of civic sector organisations had no need for CHORUS 4. Of the few that explored platforms for collaborative development of distinctive promises, the direction was scorecard based KRAs. Two operated programmes/Aims, whereas one shifted from a programme-based to an issues-based approach. The one organisation that used the term Aim initially allowed a separate representation of platforms by Unit/Aim and reflected an integrated platform on one page during its strategy review. The one that went the issues-based route added another dimension to their preparation for the collaborative development of distinctive promises – the blue ocean strategy four actions framework.

In general, the platforms across the sectors were scorecard-based.

2.0 Singing MaCoTra CHORUS 4

I have created Exhibit 3 as the generic framework for singing CHORUS 4. I argue that the top line is a people value proposition: employee promises, consonant with the structure of the MaCoTra model where employees sit in CHORUS 1.

Exhibit 3: The MaCoTra CHORUS 4 Generic Framework – Values-Based Collaborative Development of Distinctive Promises

[Diagram of Exhibit 3]

Source: Madzivire (2012:49)
One private sector organisation that did well with collaborative development of distinctive employee promises had a team of fifty five (55) volunteers to perform the task. Through the high performing teams I had facilitated, employees had highlighted five broad areas that they wanted included as part of their rewards: remuneration, benefits, accommodation, transport and education. The human resources director asked the team to form five (5) sub-teams of eleven (11) members each. Each was tasked to find out exactly what the rest of the employees expected under the one (1) aspect allocated to the sub-team. The sub-teams made presentations to the full team before making presentations to the executive team. After that, due processes were followed ending up with a full package of employee promises that were agreed between, documented, approved by the board and communicated to all management and employees. Mini-buses, suggested as a solution to employee transport woes, were bought within agreed times, to signal the beginning of employee promise delivery.

As time progressed from 2003, organisations were converging towards three (3) KRAs for the collaborative development of distinctive employee promises: Creation of a culture of execution; Provision of strategic competencies; and Provision of strategic technologies.

The internal value proposition concerns system and process promises. Almost all organisations that did strategy work with me highlighted the need to upgrade systems and processes. A few aimed for ISO certification as a measure of success in the delivery of internal systems and processes. My take is that organisations should get ISO certified to make their distinctiveness in the internal value proposition. The other two (2) KRAs that featured prominently were Compliance and Risk Management.

Broadly, the external value proposition should cover promises to customers, suppliers and communities.

In connection with customer promises, particular attention should be given to Martin’s (1995:154) counsel:

> Each individual customer experiences only certain aspects of the enterprise. These may be tangible, such as the taste of a food product, or intangible, such as the image of the food product. The enterprise, to customers is only a “black box,” a mechanism that somehow produces what they want. Most customers are not interested in the processes inside the black box. They only experience results and judge their experience on the basis of their own unique set of needs, expectations, and beliefs at a given moment. Given this dynamic subjective judgment, value can only be defined from the customers’ perspective. Value consists of the aggregate set of judgments that the market makes about the enterprise’s products and services.

*Source: Martin (1995:154)*

Suppliers are a special category of customers. They also need distinctive promises developed collaboratively ending up with either a mutually agreed supplier contract or a service level agreement or terms of reference or memoranda of understanding.
Communities should also be treated as a special type of customer. Organisations have to strive to become and create communities of choice, not communities of interest or communities of requirement. Marshall Goldsmith, in Hesselbein, Goldsmith, Beckhard & Schubert (1998:109), predicted quite rightly:

Many communities of the future will have a totally different character-they will be communities of choice. In a community of choice the members will be able to leave on short notice with very little personal cost. They will be community members because they want to be, not because they have to be. In a community of choice the balance of power is quite different. The community must prove its worth to the members as much as, or more than, the members must prove their worth to the community.


Organisations, irrespective of the sector they are in, will have to demonstrate in their distinctive promises that they are good corporate citizens with ecological intelligence. Goleman (2009:44-45) says of ecological intelligence:

To tap into this intelligence, we need to get beyond the thinking that puts mankind outside nature; the fact is we live enmeshed in ecological systems and impact them for better or worse-and they us. We need to discover and share among ourselves all the ways this intimate interconnectedness operates, to see the hidden patterns that connect human activity to the larger flow of nature, to understand our true impact on it, and to learn how to do better.

Source: Goleman (2009:44-45)

Goleman (2009:50-51) proceeds to observe:

Signs of the dawning of this shift in collective consciousness are amply visible globally, from executive teams working to make their companies’ operations more sustainable to neighborhood activists distributing reusable cloth shopping bags to replace plastic ones-wherever people are engaged in creating a way of interacting with nature that transforms our propensities for short-term trade-offs into a long-term, saner relationship. High-profile investigations into the innumerable dangers human activity poses to our planet’s ecosystem, like the growing study of global warming, are a bare beginning. Such efforts help raise our sense of the urgency. But we can’t stop there. We need to gather the on-the-ground, detailed, and sophisticated data that can guide our actions. That takes a thorough and ongoing analysis, determined discipline-and the pursuit of ecological intelligence.

Source: Goleman (2009:50-51)

This can only be achieved if organisations collaborate with communities to move beyond basic philanthropic gestures under the guise of corporate social responsibility.

The financial value proposition has a socio-economic dimension. The board/shareholder promises are ultimately economic in nature. For the not-for-profit organisations, the inclination is towards distinctive promises that add social value. As the years went by, organisations gravitated towards the following financial perspective KRAs as platforms for collaborative development of distinctive promises: *Strategic leadership; Strategic networking; Non-human capital resource attraction and application; Accountability reporting; and Shareholder value creation/Profitable business growth/Sustainable growth/Socio-economic value creation.*

CHORUS 4 has been sung in organisations in unique ways. I trust you will enjoy singing CHORUS 4.

I always have fun with it with my clients!
REFERENCES


FOR FURTHER READING


