



A change in the outlook for psychology in management

From skill-building to personal development

Karen E. Lee

Lee/Skilling Associates, Milton Keynes, UK

Keywords *Management development, Psychology, Human resource development, Work psychology, Work organization*

Abstract *Despite extensive research into psychologically-based issues in the workplace, in practice there remain a confusion and lack of knowledge about psychology and psychological issues in manager/organisation development. This article explores areas in which psychological processes affect the day-to-day lives of people in organisations, such as the use of psychological knowledge to understand and deal with people issues in the workplace, manager development as psychological development, creating a psychologically healthy work environment, and finally, exploration of a psychological process that is associated with personal/professional change and development. It is proposed that the psychodynamic process of mirroring as an essential component in children's personality development remains essential in the maintenance and development of an adult's identity. While this process occurs naturally, it can be acknowledged and used by organisations in a conscious way to provide developmental experiences and opportunities for their employees.*

Introduction

After World War II, a knowledge industry arose (initially in the USA) based on the development and maintenance of organisations (Shultz, 1984). In his article in a National Training Laboratories' publication, Shultz explained that this knowledge divided into two major branches:

- (1) management science (the more tangible and quantifiable side of business, e.g. business decisions, finance, marketing, administration); and
- (2) applied behavioural science (the "softer", psychologically-based side of business, e.g. human behaviour, leadership, group development, values and motivations).

Management science concentrates primarily on content-based cognitive development, whereas the psychological development of managers is based on personality development through insight into personal values, one's behaviour and the consequences of those behaviours for others, i.e. the impact of those behaviours. The latter type of "knowledge", more recently referred to as "emotional intelligence" (Goleman, 1996) is revealed or realised rather than taught. Owing to the differing nature of these two sides of organisational knowledge, the ways to impart or deal with these two have always been very different.

In the 1950s, National Training Laboratories in the USA began providing T-group experiences. These consisted of experience-based learning and an emphasis on feelings and human relations, on individual needs and on personal growth (Shultz, 1984). From that time to the present there has been an increasing belief in some organisations that experiences or courses that encourage the personal re-evaluation of values, feelings and behaviours are beneficial for managerial and potential managerial staff.

As a result, in order to address the need for organisation personnel to gain knowledge of human relations, it is very common to send managers, and indeed, many other personnel from managing directors to those on the “shop-floor”, to management courses that deal with “people issues” such as practical people skills, interpersonal effectiveness, how to deal with conflict, “assertiveness for maximum impact”, coaching and mentoring skills. Growing in popularity also are those courses aimed at personal development, personal growth, feelings, individual needs, manager development, team development, outdoor education, leadership development through Shakespeare, and many others. Most, if not all, of these courses are believed to, and do, have some psychological component to them. People who send others on these courses or people who volunteer to attend some of these courses often have some expectation of a psychological component. In addition to courses, instruments such as 360° feedback are designed to give people insight regarding their managerial behaviours. Thus, organisations attempt to deal in various ways with the psychological life of their employees – from providing employee assistance programmes, to trying to deal with the everyday “people issues” that arise, to providing a work atmosphere that helps motivate and uplift morale.

However, despite over 50 years of knowing that psychological insight and knowledge are as valuable as management science for organisational life, the emphasis in organisations is still on the “harder” content areas of business. Despite extensive research into psychologically-based issues in the workplace, in practice there remain a confusion and lack of knowledge about psychology and psychological issues in manager/organisation development.

Four areas which, to the author, most reflect the confusion and lack of psychological knowledge as well as the changing role of psychological knowledge in the workplace, and thus deserve consideration in this paper, are:

- (1) the use of psychological knowledge to understand, deal with, or solve people issues in the workplace setting;
- (2) manager development as psychological development;
- (3) creating a psychologically healthy work environment; and
- (4) potential “triggers” or processes that promote personal/professional change and development (two to be explored).

Much of what people are asked to do in management positions and in human resource departments is psychologically based – yet many do not have the

benefit of the basics of psychological knowledge, understanding and awareness that would help them to make more informed decisions and to understand what they are providing for their employees.

Human resource personnel, line managers, managing directors and others who are charged with the development of employees have the following responsibilities:

- to have the ability to assess and strategically plan for the longer-term developmental needs of employees;
- to assess and deal with immediate interpersonal and individual employee concerns;
- to be able to assess courses, programmes and consultants in order to be able to use them effectively in this regard;
- to have a knowledge of what constitutes normality and healthy psychological development;
- to understand the needs of employees and the organisation as a whole in terms of a healthy psychological environment; and
- to be able to understand the fundamental mechanics or processes of personal and professional development.

What do we mean by “psychology” in manager development?

Psychology is the study of the human mind, the science of human and animal behaviour and knowledge of the attitudes and behaviour typical of a person or group (Neufeld and Sparks, 1990). Developmental psychology is the study of how behaviours, attitudes and cognitive processes develop or change over time. Consulting psychology, management psychology or corporate psychology, as it is variously called, is the application of (all of the) ... principles of psychology to help people in organisations become more effective (DuBrin, 1982).

The psychodynamic theory of developmental psychology states that development comes through the insight into, awareness of and the “coming to terms with” and integration of the unconscious part of one’s psyche. Psychological awareness can help people come to an understanding of their own self-identity, what is important to them and how to deal with the ups and downs of life. It can help them move from being other-directed in determining their behaviour to looking within themselves for what will be the most authentic expression of who they are, both in their personal and in their professional lives. It can help them come to terms with the fact that they have one life and that both their personal and professional selves are an expression of that life. Finally, it can help people in organisations have the courage to come to terms with and be able to deal effectively and appropriately with the reality of their own and other people’s lives, rather than with how they imagine it

should be. In other words, it can help people “break the bubble” of illusion, which often leads to lack of action, inappropriate action, unauthentic action and subsequent dissatisfaction with their lives.

Psychology can help individuals to understand themselves and their co-workers and enable organisational personnel to deal more effectively with training issues and problems between employees and to have more awareness of the responsibility to provide a psychologically healthy atmosphere in the workplace. In addition, research is now showing (Bennis and Goldsmith, 1994; Block, 1993; 1996; Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999) that it is not enough to have just the skills or content knowledge if a person is to be a good manager, executive or CEO in an organisation – psychological maturity is essential for effective leadership ability.

The growing realisation of the link between psychological characteristics and leadership and the implication for organisations

Researchers at Cranfield University School of Management (Butcher *et al.*, 1997) have stated that “Individuals are at the top of the pyramid of change and development in an organisation” and that while “organisational development continues to intervene first and foremost at the ‘organisation’ level ... ultimately it is the extent to which individual development is effective which determines the success of top-down organisational development”. It is individuals who instigate, and are expected to carry out, change and development in an organisation – so ultimately the quality of the decisions made, the goals and visions set forth and the dealing with the consequences of these decisions are due to the quality of the capability of the people in the organisation. The abilities that Cranfield researchers (Butcher *et al.*, 1997) have identified as being of “particular relevance to managers” are cognitive skills, self-knowledge, emotional resilience and personal drive.

There are multiple demands on managers, senior executives and managing directors of organisations. The leadership roles they play are important, and the interface between the personal, individual attributes of those who are required to fulfil those roles and the complex role demands and the organisations in which they play those roles is an extremely complex one. Korac-Kakabadse and Korac-Kakabadse (1997), in their work on “top teams”, talk of “managerial fitness”. They are referring to the maturity that is required to use personal power appropriately rather than resorting to domination, to find answers to demands from within oneself rather than through rules, the ability to be sensitive to what is going on around oneself, the personal resilience needed to deal with increased visibility, the willingness to talk about and deal with sensitive issues, deep self-awareness, paying attention to the quality of dialogue one engages in, and influencing as much as being influenced.

The world of administration and management concentrates primarily on dealing with issues in an organisation so that the amount of ambiguity and uncertainty is kept to a minimum. In this arena, success is equated with

following rules and guidelines when faced with tasks or problems. However, every person has the ability to be a “leader” in the area of discretionary decision making within their held position – ambiguity and uncertainty increasing with the seniority of the position. People at the top of the organisation in official leadership roles have fewer rules to “hide behind”, bringing with that increased visibility and vulnerability (Kakabadse, 1997). Because people in senior positions in organisations have a bigger impact, they have greater responsibility – they cannot “pass the buck”. Therefore, it is essential that strong, creative, well rounded, self-aware people take on the heavy demands that upper management roles require.

All of these researchers are describing parts of a person’s psychological make-up. Therefore, if managers and leaders in organisations have to develop those psychological attributes to be effective, it is vital that organisations learn how to provide the opportunities for such development and learning to take place, and to be able to judge which interventions will be effective for this purpose and which will not.

Organisations acknowledge that their managers and executives need to develop psychological attributes to increase their effectiveness by sending them on courses, programmes, and mentoring sessions, hoping that the desired professional/personal development will take place. Those charged with providing developmental opportunities and interventions within organisations need an understanding of what these courses, mentoring and so on can do and what they cannot do. They need the ability to plan strategically for the development of their personnel and accurately and appropriately evaluate the opportunities, rather than provide “hit and miss” courses. If personnel within organisations had an understanding of the psychological processes involved, they could align processes, courses and the total environment of the organisation to their desired outcomes. My experience, however, indicates that personnel charged with this responsibility often do not have this necessary knowledge and, as often happens, they do not know what they do not know.

The following is an example. The author was asked to provide a training workshop on “Dealing with the psychological aspects of change and transition” for managers in an organisation in the financial sector that was undergoing change in the way it does business and treats its employees. The organisation was seeking to be less hierarchical and patriarchal, less internally-focused, and more concerned with customer needs. In order to reach this goal, a complete mind-set change was required in its employees – from the top of the organisation down. Employees needed to start thinking and making decisions in a more independent fashion, be in charge of their own career success and work in a co-operative, rather than competitive fashion. The skill of helping employees through a difficult transition in the organisation needed to be underpinned by greater personal awareness on the part of the members of the management team as to how they themselves were reacting to the changes imposed upon them and how they were coping. Also, the participants had to be both sensitive to the needs of others in the transition and able to deal with an

ambiguous and rapidly changing environment. In addition to personal insight, therefore, the programme was to provide the participants with models that would help them understand the attitudes and behaviour of others as they worked their way through the changes required of them in their newly defined roles. This, then, was both a developmental programme and a skill-building programme.

The person in the organisation in charge of the programme was about 30 years old and not trained in psychology. After only two hours of a four-day programme, she was highly anxious. Her concern was that the participants of the workshop did not seem to be getting “energised” by the material presented. She was nervous that they might get discouraged by all that they had to face and wanted an “up beat” presentation that would “pump them up”.

The workshop was well received by the actual participants, who were finally getting to grips with some of the real people issues involved in the massive changes they were going through – and also with some of their own reactions. The workshop was nevertheless cancelled in favour of ones on marketing skills, global strategy and other “hard content” topics – all valuable knowledge to have, but not addressing the psychological issues inherent in the situation that the workshop participants were facing.

While organisations are acknowledging responsibility for the psychological growth and development of their employees by providing courses and other interventions, there are several issues, some of which are illustrated in the example already discussed, that warrant consideration:

- (1) Are they consciously aware of what they are doing?
- (2) Are knowledgeable, appropriately-educated individuals responsible for the courses and interventions that have psychological development as outcomes?
- (3) Are those individuals taking a broad enough, integrated and systemic view of psychological health and development in the workplace environment?

For example, do they realise and act on the fact that the organisation works as an interrelated system rather than as a series of linear relationships, in order to support interventions aimed at psychological development?

An example that will illustrate the systemic nature of organisational interventions is a current consulting project. The author has been asked by an organisation to provide training programmes to help individuals deal with conflict in the workplace – a programme for middle managers. In discussing an approach with the training manager, it was pointed out that this programme would provide a developmental experience for the participants rather than strictly skills training. Participants on a programme such as this would be asked to consider their own attitudes and beliefs towards conflict as well as their style of dealing with conflict. If the programme is successful, the participants will possibly look at conflict differently, themselves in relation to

conflict differently as well as begin to use different methods to deal with conflict in the workplace. For example, they may treat others in a more straightforward, assertive manner and will “ask”, by their behaviour, to be treated in like manner. Those with whom they associate, but who may not have taken the course, may react in a variety of ways – they may notice a difference and that difference may start to change interpersonal relationships. Though they had not considered them, this particular organisation was very receptive to the implications of such a programme.

In the long run, courses that bring about behavioural and attitudinal changes are an intervention into the company culture. If these changes are not consistent with the overall vision and strategy of the organisation, if behaviour is promoted that is substantially different from that which has been acceptable in the organisational culture, so that it threatens to upset the balance of power in the organisation, they may not be seen as positive and will be resisted in a variety of ways. All of this needs to be taken into consideration so that interventions that encourage and enable the psychological development of its people are supported and integrated as part of the strategic plan for the organisation. While none of this information is, in fact, “new”, it is either not known or almost completely ignored in most cases in organisations.

The following incident is an example of dealing with conflict in the workplace, illustrating the necessity of having psychological knowledge when dealing with employee problems, the importance of personal insight and of providing a psychologically healthy environment for employees. A small not-for-profit organisation asked the author to act as consultant for them regarding an employee’s behaviour. The man, in his early 50s, had been with this organisation for eight years in a senior management position. For the previous four years, the personnel department had been aware of his inappropriate methods of managing his direct reports – yelling at them, leaving them shaking and in tears, making unreasonable demands, grilling people and going over every piece of their work in excruciating detail. A report described his management style as “aggressive, bullying and confrontational”. An accusation was made that he was at least partially responsible for a nervous breakdown and marriage collapse. His peers had periodically given him feedback regarding his behaviour, which resulted in his making minor, temporary changes – but he always reverted to his old patterns very quickly. He was in denial about his behaviour, yet also cited high workload and stress as excuses for any complaints that anyone might have about his actions.

There were many important issues involved in this case. While the immediate concern was the man in question, actually the other employees of this organisation had been affected by two things: this man’s behaviour and the inability of the personnel department to deal effectively with his behaviour over a protracted period of time.

It is not uncommon for organisations to have difficult employees and even bullies to deal with from time to time; that in and of itself need not be a major problem. This type of situation well handled and quickly dealt with can

strengthen the trust other employees have in their organisation to provide a psychologically safe environment. Problems occur if those who have the authority to do so are unwilling or unable to deal with such situations and allow them to become chronic. If not dealt with, such situations can result in low morale, high turnover, illness, depression, chronic absenteeism and lateness – many of which were being reported. Those who hold the authority and the responsibility to deal with such situations must have psychological attributes such as maturity and courage in order to use their authority appropriately.

The personnel department saw this situation as one involving the problem employee only – not as a systemic issue that had affected the whole working environment. As a result of viewing the problem in this way, their solution was to hire a mentor to help the man. They set out clear guidelines for the consultant who would ultimately be given the job. There was an expectation of complete behaviour change in this man in a three-month period and penalties for the consultant if this goal was not achieved. No disciplinary letter had been put on the file of this employee, nor were there any penalties outlined for the employee if his behaviour did not change.

The author took about one hour outlining the issues, including this man's behaviour, his reaction to being called "on the carpet" for his behaviour, possible motivations he might or might not have for change, prognosis regarding the probable outcome and the time it would take to start to see any permanent changes, rather than simply temporary, compliant behaviour on his behalf. The personnel staff agreed completely with the analysis of this man's behaviour and reactions – in fact many of the things mentioned had already come to pass.

The personnel department was advised on the actions it would need to undertake in order to ensure that this employee knew he *had* to change (for example, he would have to be threatened with disciplinary action). However, in the end, they decided that this approach felt "too negative" for them. They made the assumption that there was an inability on the part of the author to do the job as they outlined it. In other words, they projected their own inability to deal with the situation onto the consultant. They wanted someone to tell them that their unrealistic expectations were completely possible, rather than end their illusions and give them a more accurate picture of what they were dealing with – a picture that by and large they were already experiencing. In this case there was both a reluctance on the part of the organisation to deal with a difficult employee *and* a lack of understanding regarding the process of insight building and behaviour change.

In order to deal with this situation effectively, all of the above issues had to be understood, recognised and dealt with. The personnel staff, it might be noted, were very sincere, well meaning people. However, both psychological knowledge in general and personal psychological insight were essential for the effective dealing with this situation – certainly on the part of the difficult employee, but also on the part of the personnel staff in the recognition of their own failure to act in a timely fashion to deal with this problem.

If both psychological insight and knowledge were essential for dealing with this situation that affected the working environment, one might argue that any organisation that chooses to ignore the psychological development of its employees is acting in a particularly irresponsible manner.

Psychological development for managers and executives

Owing to the research on psychological characteristics of leaders, the work of NTL in the USA and the influx of psychological ideas into the workplace in general, as stated earlier, manager development as psychological development is becoming extremely important. However, as illustrated in the above examples, many people still do not have a clear idea of the important role psychology plays and how to be deliberate about it. People in organisations need help in understanding what manager development as psychological development actually is. Even when they are aware that they would like to develop long-term cognitive skills, self-knowledge, and interpersonal skills they tend to concentrate on the short-term “content” or technical managerial knowledge needed by people. Or they do not realise that they need to be concerned with the psychological aspects of development. Or they do not appreciate what any of this is about.

In context, psychological models can help simplify the understanding of human behaviour – leading paradoxically to an ability to comprehend and deal with the complexity of life and human behaviour. Out of context they give a false sense of control over life – and can lead to fundamentalist thinking as though one has “found the answer”. In other words, if one has models for psychological behaviour without the context of a knowledge of human development, life span development, human motivations etc., they can become merely simplistic ways of labelling and putting people into boxes.

In some organisations, courses that have introduced models for understanding and labelling of people have not led to more understanding of people at all, but to less understanding. Instead of treating people as individuals, they become labelled “introverts”, “judging types”, “hold ups” or “plants”. People can end up stereotyping – i.e. they make the assumption that they know all about others because of the categories into which they fall and act towards them according to these assumptions. This misuse of psychological models and beliefs supplies quick answers, relief from ambiguity, techniques of pseudo-authenticity and false and superficial comfort – and sometimes a feeling of power, which can be very seductive. Perhaps the most important contribution psychology can make is to lead people away from the phoniness of simplistic techniques (Tobias, 1990).

Personality development within the organisation

Studies of the development of the human personality have largely centred on the early years of life due to the profound influence of Freud (1938) and his heavy emphasis on childhood experience. There has been the implicit assumption that the personality is “set” in this early period and that few

important changes occur afterwards. Gradually, however, interest has expanded to the development of self-identity and personality in later years (Back and Gergen, 1968). Erikson (1950, 1958) extended the study of psychoanalytic theory to include the adult years and Jung (1945), as a psychodynamic theorist, fostered the idea that the development of or the realisation of individual self-identity continues over the course of one's entire lifetime. Gergen, in his work as a social psychologist (1968), takes the position that "there are highly significant changes in personality intrinsic to passage through the lifespan", while Jung would argue for the organic development or unfolding and revelation of the individual self. Though different, both theories seek to explain behavioural difference in the individual over the lifetime and both theories suggest ways in which the individual both changes and maintains his/her self-identity over the lifetime.

However, what triggers and supports change and development? What allows this to take place? Without that knowledge, much of what is done to promote change and development in organisations may not achieve the desired results.

How a knowledge of the process of mirroring informs the subject of personal and professional development within organisations

One of the processes or mechanisms that Jungian analysts and other psychodynamic psychologists have cited as important in the life-long process of self-identity or personality maintenance and development is mirroring. Briefly, in Jung's (and other psychoanalytic psychologists') terms, mirroring is a confirmation of or reflection back to individuals the appropriateness of their own identity as it is and also provides an emotional basis for the identity they are seeking to develop. The process of mirroring supports the maintenance and development of an individual person's whole, complete, individuated self by reflecting back to the individual approval, in various ways. Schwartz-Salant (1982) has described the process as follows: "To be mirrored is to be understood, to feel that someone empathetically follows our thoughts, feelings, experiences. To mirror a person requires a willingness to enter into her/his world, suspend critical judgement and reflect what is being offered". People seek out those who have similarities to themselves to confirm their own personal identity and environments that support who they are and what they wish to become (for example, ethnic clubs, teenagers who dress exactly like their friends or professionals in business suits).

Ego or self-identity includes (Kernberg in Garza-Guerrero, 1974; Gergen, 1971):

- (1) our perception or awareness of a sense of inner sameness or continuity of the self – our knowledge of ourselves and the value we put on ourselves; plus
- (2) the relationship between ourselves and our outer world – a sense of "consistency" between the perceptions of others in relation to the concept

of the self and vice versa and a sense of “confirmation”, corroboration or verification of one’s own identity in interaction with the environment – in other words, mirroring.

Psychodynamic psychologists such as Jung (1940/41), Micklem (1997), Mahler (1968), Winnicott (1965) and Kohut (1971) emphasise the importance of mirroring for the development of personal identity. Winnicott’s ground breaking work (1965) brought to people’s attention the essential role of the mother in mirroring her child’s nascent identity – mediating the anxiety that accompanies the child’s emerging consciousness (Schwartz-Salant, 1982). However, Jungian analysts and others engaged in psychoanalytic therapy have confirmed that the need for external mirroring (i.e. mirroring from the environment, including other people) is lifelong and represents the incompleteness that accompanies growth (Schwartz-Salant, 1982). Jung explains that the anxiety of bringing unconscious aspects of oneself into conscious awareness is mediated by the mirroring of society at large and specifically people in the individual’s immediate environment. This would include the organisation in which the person works, making it an integral part of the day-to-day process of self-growth or identity development, as well as a place to hone one’s management skills or make one’s living.

It is essential that we recognise all aspects of life as opportunities for personality and self-identity development. For people who work in organisations, much of their lives and, therefore, much of their personality development time is spent in the organisation in which they work. Organisations do, therefore, have a role in the personal/professional development of their personnel – whether they want it or not.

If we are to understand more fully the self-development process as it pertains to these individuals, one aspect deserving closer study is that of the role of mirroring in organisations for ongoing personality/self-identity maintenance and development.

Mirroring in the organisation: building the psychologically healthy environment

The model for organisations in western society was never one of holistic life experience (Rothschild and Davies, 1994), but one in which the notions of mind, reason, rationality, objectivity, scientific and masculinity would be mirrored, supported and approved of, and those things or concepts in opposition to these would not be mirrored.

Whether one is in an organisation or not, there is always a tension between oneself and “other” (individuals, society, organisations, etc.) that represents whether one’s self-definition feels verified (or mirrored) and when it does or does not – tension more or less dependent on the “goodness of fit” between the two (Lerner and Tubman, 1989). Telford (1996) notes that individuals will vary

according to their need for verification of their identity (or mirroring) in the workplace. The need for verification or mirroring in the workplace may vary according to:

- the extent to which individuals are mirrored in places other than the workplace;
- the fact that roles, other than that of manager or career person, may dominate the person's life and mirroring in and of those other roles may be more important; and
- the degree to which a person is narcissistic.

Diamond (1993) proposes, in fact, that only "pathologically narcissistic managers have need of mirroring by others in their organisations". Depending on the degree of deficiency of adequate mirroring in childhood, "mirror-hungry" managers may develop leadership styles that are autocratic, paternalistic and authoritarian. Organisational subordinates will vary in the amount that they become preoccupied with meeting the confirmation needs of managers (depending on their own strength of self-identity) and "may respond by becoming false and unauthentic". This type of pathology can result in the stunting of personality growth both for the mirror-hungry manager and for his/her subordinates. While this type of pathology most certainly exists in organisations, it is not a description of the normal and healthy need for mirroring described by Jung.

Organisations mirror only certain aspects of people's self-identity – those aspects that support the current practices and processes in the organisation. Since organisations are composed of multiple cultures, as in the larger society, some behaviours are mirrored, i.e. they are supported and approved of, and thus become more important or dominant than others. There will also be an "upper limit on the extent to which organisations can support idiosyncratic identities" (Telford, 1996). However, a lack of understanding of self-verification leads organisations to believe that individuals can and will "assimilate" their identities into that of the prevailing culture of the organisation, i.e. "give up" who they are. While some individuals may do this, becoming the "corporate" man or woman, those people who are going to become mature and responsible leaders in the organisation need to be able to verify or mirror their own developing identities with the people and situations in which they find themselves. Mirroring is an important part of the self-identity development process, aiding in the process of allowing people who are managers to develop greater insight and the self-confidence to be sensitive, self-reliant, and able to withstand the stress of responsibility. Mirroring, as a factor in the development of normal, functioning adults who work in organisations, is under-researched. To date, the process of mirroring has been studied by those interested in child development, and those interested in the clinical practice of one-on-one psychoanalytic therapy. Telford (1996), coming from a social-psychology position, is studying the self-verification of males in organisations. She argues

that the verification (or mirroring) of “alternative masculinities” within organisations may promote co-operation, altruism and mutual helping behaviours in business relations.

An important part of research into the personal and professional development of those to be groomed for managerial, executive and other leadership positions in organisations and the part that those organisations play in that development is potentially the study of the role of mirroring in that process. This study would start from the position that there is self-identity, that it must be maintained and developed through the lifespan and that the process of mirroring plays a role in both of these processes.

Future research could concentrate on answering the question: how does this mirroring process occur for managers in organisations? Should we change organisations in order to have an environment that mirrors managers’ self-identity? Are organisations capable of mirroring anyone as they are? Do people who are closely mirrored by the organisation realise it/have insight about it and are they able to articulate it? Is Bettelheim’s (1987) notion of the “good enough” mother applicable to organisations? That is, do people need to be mirrored well, but not perfectly, in organisations, so that they are both supported in their present self-identity and yet challenged by the discomfort of the differences between themselves and what is expected?

What can mirroring as a process involved in psychological development tell us about programmes and interventions designed to promote personal and professional development?

What benefit are the more unusual methods of management development and how do you evaluate their usefulness? “Leading edge” or different methods are increasingly used to develop managers – some of which are becoming increasingly popular, others of which have fallen out of favour but are still used. Some of the more commonly used alternative programmes can include:

- body/mind therapies – massage, meditation, relaxation techniques – these can be helpful to those in organisations who are “too much in their heads” or who, when they do body activities, are into competitive sports only (this expansion of experience can challenge people to bring a more holistic approach to their work life);
- drama workshops for managers, e.g. exploring psychological themes (such as leadership, manipulation, selfishness, betrayal, etc.), using Shakespeare to inform management issues, can give valuable insights into these themes in the organisation and can help bring insight into the archetypal roles that managers and MDs fall into without conscious knowledge; and
- psychodynamic personal development groups that explore past patterns of behaviour of managers help them better understand their present behaviour and the impact it has.

Organisational personnel can assess the usefulness of such methods for the development of management abilities if they are:

- clear about what they hope the participants will get out of the programmes;
- what the programmes are designed to do;
- whether or not, as a result of the programmes, the participants are encouraged to develop strategic plans for the growth and development of their interpersonal skills, self-understanding and leadership capabilities as referred to earlier in this paper; and
- whether there is follow-up available to the programmes.

Programmes, courses and mentoring experiences can be evaluated also as to whether they reflect back to the participants something about themselves as the unique individuals they are (mirroring them in the development of their own self-identity) or whether they merely encourage stereotyping and corporate cloning. Programmes that challenge the present paradigms or mind-sets of individuals while at the same time providing a safe, supportive atmosphere encouraging personal exploration are the most conducive to promoting psychological growth. Many programmes involving a psychological component need to be evaluated six months to a year or even longer after the event in order to allow the integration of personal and professional insights and awareness. Finally, in order to dispel the myths about psychology, it is essential that HR personnel, managers and managing directors know what psychology and psychologically-based programmes can and cannot do.

The future of psychological manager development

Current research confirms the importance of having psychologically healthy and mature individuals in positions of authority and responsibility, and the importance of developing businesses through developing individuals. However, it is also evident that many people in organisations charged with providing, planning and evaluation of manager development do not themselves have all the education and personal insight necessary to really understand what the development of psychological capabilities really entails.

Many resources are available both within and outside the organisation to help with the psychological development of the management personnel, yet many within organisations still do not have enough knowledge to be able to effectively use and evaluate either outside or in-company resources. It is essential that they have this knowledge if organisations are to help their employees develop the psychological characteristics crucial to good management and leadership and if they are to provide a psychologically healthy atmosphere within the organisation.

Mirroring acts as a support to psychological development. Mirroring creates within the environment of an organisation a psychologically healthy and supportive “container”, within which trust in the environment is built, and self-

challenging or questioning can occur that is essential to psychological growth and development. Whether providing access to courses that have a psychological component or making interventions into interpersonal issues in the workplace, or thinking of ways to provide a psychologically healthy work atmosphere, organisations should ensure that they encourage experiences of self-verification, support, empathy, understanding and appreciation by others of the unique human beings that work in their organisation – in other words, mirroring.

References

- Back, K.W. and Gergen, K.J. (1968), "The self through the latter span of life", in Back, K.W. and Gergen, K.J. (Eds), *The Self in Social Interaction*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY.
- Bennis, W. and Goldsmith, J. (1994), *Learning to Lead*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.
- Bettelheim, B. (1987), *A Good Enough Parent*, Vintage Books, New York, NY.
- Block, P. (1993/1996), *Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self-Interest*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, CA.
- Butcher, D., Harvey, P. and Atkinson, S. (1997), "Developing businesses through developing individuals", Study paper, Cranfield School of Management.
- Diamond, M.A. (1993), *The Unconscious Life of Organizations: Interpreting Organizational Identity*, Quorum, Westport, CT.
- DuBrin, A.J., in Tobias, L.L. (1982), *Psychological Consulting to Management*, Brunner/Mazel, New York, NY.
- Evans, R.I. (1969), *Dialogue with Erik Erikson*, E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., New York, NY.
- Freud, S. (1938), *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, The Modern Library, New York, NY.
- Gergen, K. (1968), "Personal consistency and the presentation of self", in Back, K.W. and Gergen, K.J. (Eds), *The Self in Social Interaction*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY, pp. 241-50.
- Gergen, K. (1971), *The Concept of Self*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., New York, NY.
- Goleman, D. (1996), *Emotional Intelligence*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London.
- Jung, C.G. (1940, 1941), "The psychology of the child archetype", in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Vol. 9, Part 1 of the Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Jung, C.G. (1945, 1981), *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, Vol. 8 of the Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Kakabadse, A. (1997), "Quotes from a talk on qualities of leadership", Cranfield University, Bedford.
- Kakabadse, A. and Kakabadse, N. (1999), *Essence of Leadership*, International Thomson Business Press, London.
- Kernberg, O. and Garza-Guerrero, A.C. (1974), "Culture shock", *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, Vol. 22, pp. 408-29.
- Kohut, H. (1971), *The Analysis of the Self*, International Universities Press, New York, NY.
- Korac-Kakabadse, A. and Korac-Kakabadse, N. (1997), "Best practice in the Australian public service (APS): an examination of discretionary leadership?", *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Special Issue, Vol. 12 No. 7, pp. 431-91.
- Lerner, R.M. and Tubman, J.G. (1989), "Conceptual issues in studying continuity and discontinuity in personality development across life", *Journal of Personality*, Vol. 57 No. 2, pp. 343-73.

- Mahler, M. (1968), *On Human Symbiosis and the Vicissitudes of Individuation*, International Universities Press, New York, NY.
- Micklem, N. (1997), "Mirroring", talk given at the C.G. Jung Analytical Club, London.
- Neufeldt, V. and Sparks, A. (1990), *Webster's New World Dictionary*, Warner Books, New York, NY.
- Rothschild, J. and Davies, C. (1994), "Organisations through the lens of gender: introduction to the special issue", *Human Relations*, Vol. 47 No. 6, pp. 583-90.
- Schwartz-Salant, N. (1982), *Narcissism and Character Transformation*, Inner City Books, Toronto.
- Shultz, J. (1984), "Historical overview of OD consulting", in Lee, R.J. and Freedman, A.M. (Eds), *Consultations Skills Reading*, NTL Institute, Arlington, VA.
- Telford, L. (1996), "Selves in bunkers: organizational consequences of failing to verify alternative masculinities", in Cheng, C. (Ed.), *Masculinities in Organisations*, Sage Publications, London and Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.
- Tobias, L.L. (1990), *Psychological Consulting to Management*, Brunner/Mazel, New York, NY.
- Winnicott, D.W. (1965), *The Family and Individual Development*, Tavistock Publications, London.