



Every paradigm includes and transcends the previous. So if we have learned to operate from, say, Achievement-Orange, we still have the ability, when appropriate, to also react from Conformist-Amber or Impulsive-Red. Even the opposite is true to some extent: were we to be surrounded by people operating from a later stage, for example, Pluralistic-Green, we could temporarily display Green behaviors, even though we wouldn't yet have integrated this stage.

There are **many dimensions of human development**—cognitive, moral, psychological, social, spiritual, and so on—and we don't necessarily grow at the same pace in all of them.

Human consciousness evolves in successive stages (-.) The problem is not with the reality of the stages; it is with how we view the staircase. A way to avoid attaching judgment to stages is to recognize that each stage is well adapted to certain contexts.

*„The most exciting breakthroughs of the twenty-first century will not occur because of technology, but because of an **expanding concept of what it means to be human.**”*

John Naisbitt

„It takes inspired and courageous leadership to build organizations that are ahead of their time.”

Ego

Each shift occurs when we are able to reach a higher vantage point from which we see the world in broader perspective. Like a fish that can see water for the first time when it jumps above the surface, gaining a new perspective requires that we disidentify from something we were previously engulfed in. The shift to **Evolutionary-Teal** happens when we learn to disidentify from our own ego.

We can **learn to minimize our need to control**, to look good, to fit in. We are no longer fused with our ego, and we don't let its fears reflexively control our lives. In the process, we make room to listen to the wisdom of other, deeper parts of ourselves.

Even if something unexpected happens or if we make mistakes, things will turn out all right, and when they don't, life will have given us an opportunity to learn and grow.



Never before in human history have we had people operating from so many different paradigms all living alongside each other.

In a broad generalization, it is safe to say that, in developed societies, **Impulsive-Red Organizations** persist only at the fringes of legal activity. **Conformist-Amber** is still heavily present in government agencies, the military, religious organizations, and public school systems. **Achievement-Orange** is clearly the dominant paradigm of business corporations, from Wall Street to Main Street. **Pluralistic-Green** organizational practices are making increasing inroads, not only in the world of nonprofits, but in the business sector as well.

| | Current examples | Key breakthroughs | Guiding metaphor | |
|----------------------|--|---|---|---------------|
| RED organizations | <p>Constant exercise of power by chief to keep troops in line. Fear is the glue of the organization. Highly reactive, short-term focus. Thrives in chaotic environments.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mafia• Street gangs• Tribal militias | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Division of labor• Command authority | • Wolf pack |
| AMBER organizations | <p>Highly formal roles within a hierarchical pyramid. Top-down command and control (what and how). Stability valued above all through rigorous processes. Future is repetition of the past.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catholic Church• Military• Most government agencies• Public school systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formal roles <i>(stable and scalable hierarchies)</i>• Processes <i>(long-term perspectives)</i> | • Army |
| ORANGE organizations | <p>Goal is to beat competition; achieve profit and growth. Innovation is the key to staying ahead. Management by objectives (command and control on what; freedom on the how).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multinational companies• Charter schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Innovation• Accountability• Meritocracy | • Machine |
| GREEN organizations | <p>Within the classic pyramid structure, focus on culture and empowerment to achieve extraordinary employee motivation.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Culture driven organizations (e.g., Southwest Airlines, Ben & Jerry's, ...) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empowerment• Values-driven culture• Stakeholder model | • Family |
| TEAL organizations | <p>Striving to be self-less in service of a higher purpose. We are at our most productive and joyful when all of who we are is energized by a broader purpose that nourishes our calling and our soul.</p> | | <p>Self-management Evolutionary purpose Wholeness</p> | Living system |

„True genius of organizations: they can lift groups of people to punch above their weight, to achieve outcomes they could not have achieved on their own.”

Magenta paradigm - the shift from small family bands to tribes of up to a few hundred people.

“clouds move to follow me; bad weather is the spirits’ punishment for my bad actions” - world seen as magical, tribes seek comfort in ritualistic behaviors. No abstraction yet, no classification, no concept of large numbers. Today, this stage is typically experienced by children of around three to 24 months of age.

Impulsive-Red: initially small conquering armies, later more powerful chiefdoms grew into proto-empires. They can still be found today in the form of street gangs and mafias. Wolves packs as a metaphor - “alpha wolf” uses power when needed to maintain his status within the pack, similarly chief of Red Organization must demonstrate power and bend others to his will.

Poor at planning and strategizing but highly reactive to new threats and opportunities that they can pursue ruthlessly. **Centerness** makes them well adapted to chaotic environments.

Amber paradigm - at the Conformist-Amber stage, reality is perceived through Newtonian eyes. Cause and effect are understood, people can grasp linear time (past, present, future) and project into the future. **Conformist-Amber consciousness** develops a deeper awareness of other people's feelings and perceptions. Strive for approval, acceptance, and belonging in my social circle. **The dualistic** thinking of Red is still present, but the individual “my way or your way” is replaced with a collective “us or them.”

Orange glorifies decisive leadership. Achievement-Orange Orgaginizations are achieving results on entirely new orders of magnitude, thanks to three additional breakthroughs: innovation, accountability, and meritocracy.

The world seen no longer as a fixed universe governed by immutable rules, but as a complex clockwork, whose inner workings and natural laws can be investigated and understood. **Effectiveness replaces morals** as a yardstick for decision-making: the better I understand the way the world operates, the more I can achieve;

Orange is arguably the dominating worldview of most leaders in business and politics.

Pluralistic-Green strives for bottom-up processes, gathering input from all and trying to bring opposing points of view to eventual consensus. Green insists that leaders should be in service of those they lead. Its stance is noble—it is generous, empathetic, and attentive to others.

Teal organizations corresponds to Maslow's “self-actualizing” level. The key to operate effectively, even at a large scale, with a system based on **peer relationships**, without the need for either hierarchy or consensus.

Teal is happy to tap into all the domains of knowing. Instead of setting goals for our life, dictating what direction it should take, we learn to let go and listen to the life that wants to be lived through us.

Inner rightness

When we are fused with our ego, we are driven to make decisions informed by external factors—what others will think or what outcomes can be achieved. In the **Impulsive-Red** perspective, a good decision is the one that gets me what I want. In **Achievement-Orange**, effectiveness and success are the yardsticks. In **Pluralistic-Green**, matters are judged by the criteria of belonging and harmony. In **Evolutionary-Teal**, we shift from external to internal yardsticks in our decision-making. We are now concerned with the question of inner rightness: does this decision seem right? Am I being of service to the world? ^{WEO} In contrast with previous stages, the order is reversed: we do not pursue recognition, success, wealth, and belonging to live a good life. We pursue a life well-lived, and the consequence might just be recognition, success, wealth, and love.

Amber Organizations

The Catholic Church is built on this paradigm—arguably it has been the defining Amber Organization for the Western world. The **first large corporations** of the Industrial Revolution were run on this template. Amber Organizations are still very present today: most government agencies, public schools, religious institutions, and the military are run based on **Conformist-Amber** principles and practices.

A good organization should be run like an army. Within a rigid hierarchy, there must be a clear chain of command, formal processes, and clear-cut rules that stipulate who can do what.

Breakthroughs:
Long-term perspective (stability)
Instead of highly-opportunistic red organizations amber can take on long-term projects. People strive for order and predictability;
Size and stability (hierarchies)
Comand-control of management, underlying worldview is that workers are mostly lazy, dishonest, and in need of direction. They must be supervised and told what is expected of them.

A human ... experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.

Albert Einstein

Orange Organizations are obsessed with competition (-.)

when an organization truly lives for its purpose, there is no competition.

Wisdom beyond rationality

In **Orange**, rationality is king (decisions that will yield best outcome). The modern-scientific perspective is wary of emotions that could cloud our ability to reason rationally. **Green** sometimes goes to the other extreme, rejecting analytical “left brain” approaches for “right brain” feeling as a basis for decision-making. **Teal**, less attached to outcomes, can more easily accept the sometimes unpleasant truths of reality; therefore, rational thinking within Teal can be more accurately informed by data.

Another cognitive breakthrough is the ability to **reason in paradox**, transcending the simple either-or with more complex both-and thinking. In **Teal**: freedom and responsibility, solitude and community, tending to the self and tending to others.

Orange Organizations

From an Orange perspective, all individuals should be free to pursue their goals in life, and the best in their field should be able to make it to the top. In practice, though, Achievement-Orange does not deconstruct the traditional Conformist-Amber world fully.

In Orange, we effectively live in the future, consumed by mental chatter about the things we need to do so as to reach the goals we have set for ourselves. We hardly ever make it back to the present moment.

Achievement-Orange thinks of organizations as machines, a heritage from reductionist science

In Orange to achieve results, people must be motivated by individual incentives (no problem if this results in large wage differentials). This thinking has created rather extraordinary wage inequalities in recent years.

Breakthroughs:
Innovation people operating from the Orange paradigm can live in the world of possibilities, of what is not yet but could one day be. **Amber Organizations are entirely process driven; Orange Organizations are process and project driven.**

Accountability
Amber command and control becomes Orange predict and control. This allows for **management by objectives**. People are driven by material success.

Meritocracy
In principle, anybody can move up the ladder, and nobody is predestined to stay in his position.

„culture is how things get done, without people having to think about”

Relations to others

In earlier stages, when we disagree with other people, we often meet them in judgment, believing that we must be right and they must be wrong. Or we can, in the name of tolerance, the **Green** ideal, gloss over our differences and affirm that all truths are equally valid. In **Teal**, we can transcend this polarity and integrate with the higher truth of non-judgment? we can examine our belief and find it to be superior in truth and yet embrace the other as a human being of fundamentally equal value.

Our listening is no longer limited to gathering information so as to better convince, fix, or dismiss. We can create a shared space safe from judgment, where our deep listening helps others to find their voice and their truth, just as they help us find ours.

Green Organizations

The Pluralistic-Green worldview holds that idea *“What works and what doesn’t”* is still too simplistic. There is more to life than success or failure.

Pluralistic-Green is keenly **aware of Orange's shadow over people and society**: the materialistic obsession, the social inequality, the loss of community.

Pluralistic-Green is **highly sensitive to people's feelings**. It insists that all perspectives deserve equal respect. It seeks fairness, equality, harmony, community, cooperation, and consensus.

Green leaders should not merely be dispassionate problem solvers (like in Orange); they should be servant leaders, listening to their subordinates, empowering them, motivating them, developing them.

Breakthroughs:
Value-driven culture and inspirational purpose - A strong, shared culture is the glue that keeps empowered organizations from falling apart.

Values-driven organizations can outperform their peers by wide margins. For Green Organizations, the company culture is paramount

Multiple stakeholder perspective
Businesses have a responsibility not only to investors, but also to management, employees, customers, suppliers, local communities, society at large, and the environment.

“Success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side-effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself.”

This idea is another great paradox: by focusing on purpose rather than profits, profits tend to roll in more plentifully.

Going Teal

L'entreprise qui croit que l'Homme est bon

If we “go Teal,” then instead of setting goals for our life, dictating what direction it should take, we learn to let go and listen to the life that wants to be lived through us.

The founders of Teal Organizations use a different metaphor for the workplaces they aspire to create. With surprising frequency, they talk about their organization as a living organism or living system.

Spontaneous hierarchies to spring up—fluid hierarchies of recognition, influence, and skill (sometimes referred to as “actualization hierarchies” in place of traditional “dominator hierarchies”).

The general philosophy is one of **reverse delegation**. The expectation is that the frontline teams do everything, except for the things they choose to push upward.

Total responsibility
In Teal Organizations, people have roles, which come with clear areas of responsibility, but no turfs. No part of the organization belongs to anybody.

“The more you increase individual responsibility, the better the chances for incremental improvements in operations,”

Breakthroughs:
Self-management: peer relationships, without the need for either hierarchy or consensus. Self-governing teams in pursuit of a meaningful purpose don't need prodding from above.

Evolutionary purpose (what the organization wants to become, what purpose it wants to serve).

Wholeness set of practices that invite us to reclaim our inner wholeness and bring all of who we are to work.

Many of the **corporate ills** today can be traced to behaviors driven by fearful **egos**: politics, bureaucratic rules and processes, endless meetings, analysis paralysis, information hoarding and secrecy, wishful thinking, ignoring problems away, lack of authenticity, silos and infighting, decision-making concentrated at the top of organizations, and so forth. (-.)

Taming the ego could have deep repercussions on how we structure and run organizations.

The more complex our worldview and cognition, the more effectively we can deal with problems we face.

People are not made to **fit pre-defined jobs**; their job emerges from a multitude of roles and responsibilities they pick up based on their interests, talents, and the needs of the organization.

Our cultural baggage of hierarchy is so strong that over time, team leaders could start behaving like bosses and become the primary decision makers on their teams.

In all organizations researched for the book, there is one person recognized for taking the **broadest perspective**, and usually that person is called the CEO, at least by the outside world

Safe environment
The soul is like a wild animal. Just like a wild animal, the soul is tough, resilient, savvy, resourceful, and self-sufficient: it knows how to survive in hard places. Yet despite its toughness, **the soul is also shy**. Just like a wild animal, it seeks safety in the dense underbrush, especially when other people are around. If we want to see a wild animal, we know that the last thing we should do is go crashing through the woods yelling for it to come out. **Crashing through the woods is how we have learned to be together in organizations**. If we are to invite all of who we are to show up, including the shy inner voice of the soul, we need to create safe and caring spaces at work.

The principal **science of the next century will be the study of complex**, autocatalytic, self-organizing, non-linear, and adaptive systems.

self-management is not a startling new invention by any means. It is the way life has operated in the world for billions of years, bringing forth creatures and ecosystems so magnificent and complex we can hardly comprehend them. **Self-organization is the life force of the world**, thriving on the edge of chaos with just enough order to funnel its energy, but not so much as to slow down adaptation and learning.

„Clouds form and then go away because atmospheric conditions, temperatures, and humidity cause molecules of water to either condense or vaporize. Organizations should be the same; structures need to appear and disappear based on the forces that are acting in the organization. When people are free to act, they're able to sense those forces and act in ways that fit best with reality.

Hamel „First, Let's Fire All the Managers”

Karpman Drama Triangle model of Presecutor, Rescuer, Victorim

The Victim: The Victim's stance is “Poor me!” The Victim feels victimized, oppressed, helpless, hopeless, powerless

The Rescuer: The rescuer's line is “Let me help you.” A classic enabler, the Rescuer feels guilty if they don't go to the rescue. Yet their rescuing has negative effects: It keeps the Victim dependent

The Persecutor: (a.k.a. Villain) The Persecutor insists, “It's all your fault.” The Persecutor is controlling, blaming, critical, oppressive, angry, authoritarian.

A drama triangle arises when a person takes on the role of a victim or persecutor. This person then feels the need to enlist other players into the conflict. As often happens, a rescuer is encouraged to enter the situation. The victim might turn on the rescuer, the rescuer then switches to persecuting.

The motivations for each participant and the reason the situation endures is that each gets their unspoken (and frequently unconscious) psychological wishes/needs met in a manner they feel justified, without having to acknowledge the broader dysfunction or harm done in the situation as a whole

In The Teal organization the world keeps holding up a mirror to you, saying, “You can process your tensions. If you're choosing to be a victim, that is your choice, and perhaps a choice because you don't know how to do something else, but it's not because somebody else is persecuting you. It is your choice to stay in that pattern if you so choose.”