# Resistance to change:

## Four interpretations

2010/1

Louise D. Bringselius

Abstract

Although the phenomenon of resistance to change has gained considerable attention in organization theory over the years, the meaning of the concept is rarely discussed. In this paper, a conceptual framework is suggested that distinguishes between four interpretations of resistance: Resistance as conviction, opinion, psychological reaction, and personality. It builds upon the two variables of changeability and emotionality. Each interpretation is based on different assumptions and theoretical influences, as well as connected to different change management strategies. The framework can facilitate communication pertaining to resistance across different theoretical perspectives and help explain empirical observations related to resistance and change management strategies. Finally, observations from two case studies reveal that assumptions about resistance can shift in the course of a change process, thus indicating a dynamic dimension to the framework.

Author:

**Louise Bringselius**
Lund University, Department of Business Administration
Address: Box 7080, SE-220 07 Lund, SWEDEN
E-mail: louise.bringselius@fek.lu.se
Phone: +46 (0) 708 33 00 30

# Introduction

In organization theory, a broad group of scholars (e.g. Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Ford, Ford, & d'Amelio, 2008; King & Anderson, 1995; Knowles & Linn, 2004; Symon, 2005; Bringselius, 2008) have suggested that the classic concept of resistance should be reassessed. Historically, resistance has been understood as a reaction based on emotions and dysfunctional to the organization. Craine (2007), for example, explains how resistance will hamper any organizational change and he talks about how change always will start with reactions such as denial, shock, frustration, and anger. This line of thought is influenced by social psychology, a field that has gained increasing influence in organization theory since the 1950s. In The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, the social psychologists Avey, Wernsing and Luthans (2008:48) begin an article by confirming that: "Both scholars and practitioners would agree that employee resistance to change is a primary obstacle for effective organizational change processes and programs".

Ford, Ford and d'Amelio (2008) and Ford and Ford (2009) suggest that resistance should instead be understood as an important source of employee feedback. They explain that in this way, resistance "can be an important resource in improving the quality and clarity of the objectives and strategies at the heart of a change proposal. And, properly used, it can enhance the prospects for successful implementation." (Ford & Ford, 2009:103). This is similar to Hirschman (1970), who claims that voice sometimes can be understood as the evidence of loyalty, rather than the opposite. Knowles and Linn (2004) emphasize that resistance can increase the quality of management decisions in a change process.

The increasing interest in the resistance concept and how it can be understood is welcome. This discussion has been missing in the past (Jermier et al., 1994; Knights & Vurdubakis, 1994; Knights & Willmott, 1990), despite the central position of the concept in organization theory. Knights and Vurdubakis (1994:168) explain that there is "by no means a consensus within the literature as to the meaning of, or significance which should be attributed to, resistance". Rather than an open discussion, there have been tacit assumptions on resistance. These need to be elucidated, in order to agree on a way to understand assumptions on the phenomenon in different theoretical fields.

For example, many social psychologists have tended to assume that resistance is based on emotions and that resistance can be reduced if these emotions are properly managed. The influence of biology and personality psychology has led to the assumption that certain individuals will always resist change, due to psychological predispositions that can rarely be altered. Labour process theory focuses on the content of resistance, which is understood as rational employee objections. Hodson (1995) argues that the under-conceptualization of resistance has "limited our ability to develop theories of the workplace that include an active role for workers". Similar claims can be made in a context of highly skilled professionals, where employees tend to demand a high level of autonomy and influence in management decisions (Löwendahl, 1997; Maister, 1993; Mintzberg, 1993; Raelin, 1985; Sharma, 1997). Furthermore, the distinction between resistance and whistle-blowing in change processes has not been explored.

In this paper, four theoretical interpretations have been distinguished in a conceptual framework, based on scholarly writings in the literature pertaining to resistance to change, in the following areas (i) assumptions on the nature of resistance, (ii) theoretical influence and (iii) change management strategies. This framework provides both scholars and practitioners with perspectives that can facilitate communication in the course of as well as about ongoing change processes and the factors that may provoke resistance. It bridges theoretical perspectives and allows us to better understand

why preferences concerning change management strategies may differ. The framework helps us to understand and relate to contemporary trends in organization theory and to question the influence of various theoretical fields on resistance theory. It is a privilege to be able to borrow theory from other fields, but such a privilege demands responsibility as well as awareness of the direction in which this influence may take us.

The paper is divided into four sections. In the first, the two variables changeability and emotionality are presented. In the second, the four interpretations are introduced and related to change management strategies and influential theoretical fields. In the third section, a summary is provided in the form of a table and a figure. Finally, in conclusions contemporary trends in change management theory are discussed and the theoretical contribution of the framework suggested in this paper is established.

## Changeability and emotionality

We suggest that two variables, the changeability and emotionality of resistance, be applied to distinguish between assumptions on resistance to change. These variables are briefly introduced in the following.

The changeability of resistance means the assumed prospects of being able to influence and change the level of resistance of an employee. Is resistance constant or is it possible to change the level of employee resistance?

With low changeability, resistance can be a matter of fundamental convictions and ideals. With higher changeability, it may be more a matter of arguments and opinions, about which the employee is prepared to negotiate. This can be compared to Schein's (1985) model that defines culture, where there are assumptions at the bottom, followed by values and finally artefacts at a surface (top) level, and changeability increases for each higher level. Individuals will seldom change their most fundamental convictions, whereas opinions usually are more easily negoted.

The emotionality of resistance depicts assumptions about the degree to which resistance is based on emotions. This is an important aspect of change management theory. Resistance to change has traditionally been described as connected to emotions such as fear and anxiety (Sinetar, 1981; Fulmer & Gilkey, 1988; Kusstatscher & Cooper, 2005), which are assumed to be either a reaction to a situation external to the employee, with for example a high level of uncertainty in the organization, or a matter of personality. In labour process theory, it is recommended that management should recognise the actual content of resistance – what do employees oppose, what do they suggest and could this in fact be a better solution? This position, which assumes low emotionality behind resistance, has gained increasing support in the broader field of organization theory, one example being Ford, Ford and d'Amelio (2008).

## Four interpretations

When the variables are placed in a diagram, four fields can be distinguished, resulting in four interpretations pertaining to resistance to change, see points A-D in Figure 1. The boundaries between the interpretations are not sharp.

**Changeability
of resistance**

A.
*Opinion*

B.
*Psychological
reaction*

C.
*Conviction*

D.
*Personality*

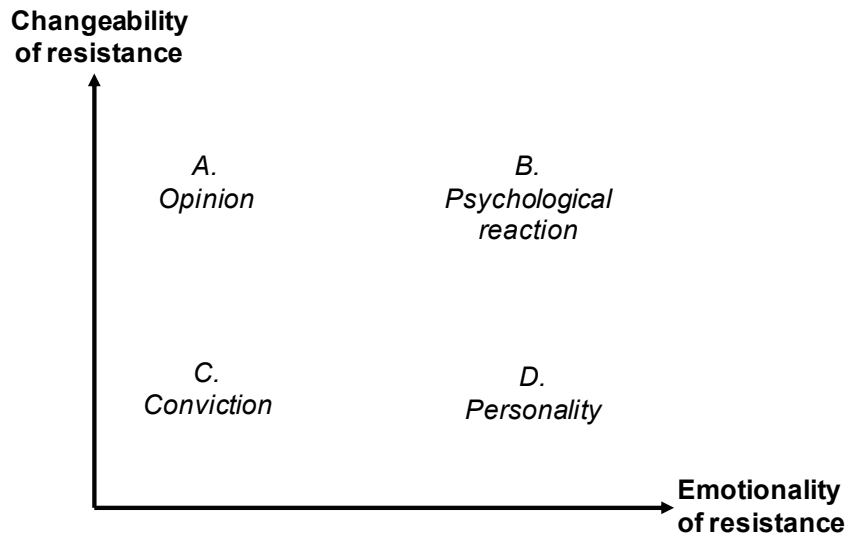**Emotionality
of resistance**

Figure 1: Four interpretations pertaining to assumptions on resistance to change

The theoretical influence in each interpretation differs, as do the central themes and change management strategies for responding to resistance. In the following, we shall take a closer look at each of the four interpretations.

## Interpretation A: Resistance as opinions

Common themes in Interpretation A are employee influence, opinions and feedback. High changeability and low emotionality is assumed, as concerns the nature of resistance to change. For example, a few decades ago (e.g. Rhenman, 1964), it was common to discuss workplace democracy, and this theme has remained popular among certain groups (e.g. McMahon, 1994).

Labour process theory and human resource management theory (HRM theory) have been highly influential in this interpretation of resistance. The former originates from research on working conditions, primarily in a manufacturing or industrial context. Today, it focuses on, among other things, techniques for exerting control and on employee subordination.

A fundamental assumption of HRM theory is the balance between employee and employer interests, which can be traced back to Cyert and March (1963). Cyert and March (1963) argued that people's personal goals often differ from those of the organization and that a primary responsibility of managers is therefore to persuade staff members to direct their efforts towards the organizational goals. Resistance is primarily understood in terms of the content of objections in labour process theory and HRM theory.

However, it is possible to talk of employee contracts with several different interpretations of resistance. Strebel (1996), for example, mentions a personal contract (although he replaces it with the word "compact") between employer and employee. As opposed to Cyert and March (1963), he assumes that the default position of employees is resistance and that this merely needs to be overcome by renegotiating this personal contract with the employee. Strebel (1996:92) writes:

> Regardless of the cultural context, unless the revision of personal compacts is integral to the
> change process, companies will not accomplish their goals. […] Without such leadership,

3

employees will remain sceptical of the vision for change and distrustful of management, and management will likewise be frustrated and stymied by employees' resistance.

This quote indicates that Strebel's assumptions on resistance correspond better to interpretation B, than interpretation A.

A common change management strategy of interpretation A is dialogue aimed at gaining as much support as possible for planned changes, but also allowing to negotiate and adjust plans. The primary goal of this strategy is improved decision quality, by utilizing the knowledge of employees. Important secondary goals include employee motivation and efficiency.

## Interpretation B: Resistance as a psychological reaction

In Interpretation B, it is common to consider resistance as a psychological reaction and to explain it in terms of stereotypes or social categorization. Social psychology has been highly influential in this interpretation, where high changeability and high emotionality is assumed as concerns resistance to change.

For many years, stereotypes and categorization have been regarded as pathological in social psychology (Brown and Gaertner, 2001:16f). However, as Brown and Gaertner (2001) argue, conflict between groups does not have to be a problem – it can be a natural and healthy process, in which individuals learn to relate to a certain social context. This line of thought is becoming increasingly popular in the field of social psychology. Stereotypes are simplified images of groups of individuals (Brown & Gaertner, 2001). A related theoretical field is Social Identity Theory, but in this field, the assumed probability of being able to change resistance (when attached to an identity) is lower.

When resistance is assumed to be changeable and emotional, it is common to adopt a change management strategy based on some kind of "therapy". This can take the form of workshops or extensive information and dialogue. The aim of this strategy is to build acceptance of planned changes, in contrast to Interpretation A, where management is prepared to adjust these plans after negotiations. The aim of extensive information is to reduce uncertainty, which is assumed to be a common reason for employee resistance. This information can be compared to two-way communication strategy that includes negotiations, and thereby some level of employee influence.

Improved employee motivation is the primary management goal behind the change management strategies in Interpretation B. Craine (2007:44) is one of the authors who best represent these assumptions on resistance:

> Perhaps creative thinker and author Roger Von Oech said it best: 'There are two basic rules of life: Change is inevitable, and everybody resists change.' Resisting change is as congenital as being frightened of the dark, having a crush at age 16, or laughing at the Three Stooges. Little can be done to avoid these reactions. They are natural, emotional, and inevitable. This innate resistance to change occurs because most people like things to be comfortable and familiar. […] Thus, by understanding the 'grieving' process people use to deal with change, it may be possible to reduce some of the potentially damaging consequences.

Craine (2007) suggests how a "change cycle" can be understood, in terms of "a four-step cycle of emotions that individuals are likely to experience when faced with change". He talks of resistance as emotional, but possible to change, and outlines a therapeutic change program to help employees overcome this otherwise "innate" resistance. Fulmer and Gilkey (1988:276) are another example of

scholars adopting Interpretation B of resistance. They compare resistance to the immature behaviour of "a teenager in a blended family".

## Interpretation C: Resistance as convictions

In Interpretation C, resistance is understood in terms of convictions and ideals and ethics is a common theme. Convictions are based on a non-emotional line of thought and fundamental priorities, which are not easily changed. Morality is also usually deeply rooted within the individual. Changeability and emotionality and both assumed to be low with this interpretation of resistance.

Theoretical influences in Interpretation C stem from moral philosophy and whistle-blowing theory. There is also theory on social movements that falls under this category (e.g. Jasper, 1997). Whistle-blowing is based on a conviction that there is some kind of wrong-doing, meaning that there is an important moral element (Miceli, Near, Morehead Dworkin, 2008).

With regard to change management strategies, dialogue is central when resistance is interpreted in terms of convictions and ideals, and the congruence between individual employee convictions and organizational values and practice is focused upon. A strategy of dismissing certain employees may result, which is common in cases of whistle-blowing (Miceli et al., 2008). However, in cases where the employee's protest is legitimate, the primary strategy would be to adjust the plans for change. In this way management strategies aim to improve organizational ethics as well as decision quality and employee motivation, while increased efficiency is a possible side-effect.

Piderit (2000:783) claims that "researchers have largely overlooked the potentially positive intentions that may motivate negative responses to change". Resistance may thus actually represent rational objections to changes that are considered non-beneficial to the organization or to its mission. Interpretation C connects well to this standpoint.

## Interpretation D: Resistance as personality

Finally, in Interpretation D, resistance is assumed to be based on emotions, and the probability of being able to change it is considered low. Common themes are psychological predispositions and personality.

Biology and the natural sciences in general have been influential in this interpretation, with its focus on genetic predisposition and personality psychology, including both the individual and collective (human nature) levels of analysis. This line of thought has been subjected to considerable competition from social psychology, which tends to hold that individual behaviour can be influenced in different ways (higher changeability).

Dismissal and replacement of resistant employees are common change management strategies in Interpretation D. Because resistance is assumed to be highly emotional and unlikely to change, it is easy to label employees who object as impossible by personality, especially when it is assumed that resistance is contagious (e.g. Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994). With these assumptions, resistant employees tend to be described as irrational, emotionally governed and even "bitter" (e.g. Buono & Bowditch, 1989:110). Buono and Bowditch (1989:110) write:

> Over time, bitter organizational members depart, and the employees who remain within the new organization may begin to feel better about their situation

These scholars do not assume that (the "bitter") employees can change their sentiment, and nor do they assume that it may be of interest to management to understand the reasons why they are bitter.

Improved efficiency is the primary goal of this management strategy.

## A dynamic dimension

So far, four interpretations of resistance to change have been presented, in a static framework. This is based on a review of change management theory and the fields that influence this area. We shall now turn to the empirical side of the framework, and look at managerial interpretations of resistance in actual change processes. Is there a dynamic dimension to this framework, indicating that interpretations of resistance may change over time in a change process? Observations from two case studies of mergers indicate that it is. These preliminary findings are reported in this section. The aim is not to provide evidence of a dynamic dimension or a specific development, as that would require a more thorough investigation, but to indicate that this is a matter worth exploring further in future research.

Two case studies have been conducted, focusing on change processes in the public administration in Sweden. The first covers the merger of two national audit offices (NAOs) and is thus termed the NAO case. The second, termed the SIA case, addresses the transformation of the social insurance agency (SIA) in Sweden in recent years. The NAO case study covered a period of five years, starting a year before the merger. A total of 92 interviews were conducted during this period, with both management and employees, and 11 meetings were observed. The process received a great deal of criticism and the new agency experienced serious administrative problems. The SIA case study, which forms part of the research program "Out of many, one?" at Lund university, covers a two year period and has not yet been concluded. Approximately 50 interviews were conducted with management and employees during a two year period as part of the research program.

In the following, we will describe how management reasoned on employee resistance, understood as objections, in the two cases. Within brackets, interpretation A-D is suggested for different observations.

In the NAO case, the change process started with a kick-off for all personnel, with the parliamentary committee in charge of the reform informing the employees (in the course of an information meeting to mark the launch) that they would "not go berserk" and that staff members should not hesitate to contact committee members if things went wrong; "We depend on you to observe what is required in the organization. […] Don't let anything continue that appears to be developing in the wrong way", they asked (Interpretations A, C). When the new Director-Generals took on their positions half a year later, objections to their leadership and decisions increased rapidly. The management team explained that the employees were "afraid" and that it always takes time for people to accept changes as vast as these (Interpretation B). There were rumours of a "black list" of staff members who they planned to dismiss, and soon a number of employees were offered severance packages in return for their letter of resignation. Employee objections concerned both managerial ethics and the quality of management decisions (Interpreations A, C). Workshops were held, where staff members were asked to reflect on what they could do to improve the workplace atmosphere, rather than only pointing their collective finger at the management (Interpretation B). Meanwhile, the management team continued to emphasize that employees were merely afraid, and added that the most senior employees were more prone to resistance than their more recently hired colleagues. They explained that resistance would diminish as more new staff members were recruited (Interpretation D). Employee attitude surveys did not support this statement, but instead indicated that newly recruited staff members were also highly critical of the leadership. The management team then argued that employees in a NAO generally tend to be extremely critical, and that this was the reason for the heavy criticism to which they were subjected (Interpretation D).

Observations from the NAO case indicate that the management first interpreted in accordance with the left side of the framework, with Interpretations A and C. As the conflict increased, there was a shift to the right hand side of the framework, with Interpretations B and D. When therapeutical measures had failed to curb resistance, managerial assumptions remained with Interpretation D, leaving them only the option to replace critical personnel.

Before the reform of the social insurance administration (SIA), employee influence was high in the organization(s). Personnel objections were considered important (Interpretations A, C). During the change process, managers explained that personnel, although highly educated, were irrational and therefore could not be allowed to influence the change process. In an article, a psychologist was interviewed under the heading "How can we cope with the changeover?" (DS, 2006/06:19). She emphasized the importance of employees meeting with their managers to talk about how they feel, adding that: "In times of anxiety, people often act irrationally. It then easily happens that scapegoats are sought". (Interpretation B). Staff members reported that those who expressed objections risked losing their positions with the agency (Interpretation D). The internal news magazine was informally called Pravda, because its content was considered strongly biased in favour of the management perspective. After the new Director-General had taken on her position, the change management strategy was changed to include personnel to a higher degree. A newly recruited top manager explained the importance of listening to personnel in order to ensure that the right decisions are made (Interpretation A, C). An article was published on the SIA Intranet (FIA 17 feb. 2009, also referred to in DS 2009/02), where a scholar talked about the benefits of resistance, saying:

> There is a conception among authoritarian managers and consultants that criticism and resistance to change is counterproductive. That participation is the same as accepting the situation and knowing the goals. You often mix up passive obedience with commitment, something that can be fatal.

Observations from the SIA case correspond well to observations from the NAO case. Management first interpreted resistance in accordance with the left side of the framework, with Interpretations A and C. As resistance increased, there was a shift to the right hand side of the framework, with Interpretations B and finally D. As the change process started afresh with a partly new leadership, management expressed assumptions on resistance that once again corresponded to Interpretations A and C.

## Summary

An overview of the theoretical influences, change management strategies and some common themes in each interpretation of resistance is provided in Table 1. It should be noted that parts of psychology rather fits with the left side of the framework. An important aspect is, however, that by referring to resistance as a psychological reaction, it becomes legitimate to disregard these objections. This is a reason to try to interpret resistance primarily according to the left side of the framework, before assuming emotional underpinnings and cast resistance aside.

Finally, the reader is asked to note that convictions must not always be legitimate (making it whistle-blowing rather than resistance) per se, but this must be subject to an evaluation.

Table 1. Characteristics of the four interpretations of resistance to change

| | A<br>Opinion | B<br>Psychological reaction | C<br>Conviction | D<br>Personality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *High changeability, low emotionality* | *High changeability, high emotionality* | *Low changeability, low emotionality* | *Low changeability, high emotionality* |
| **Theoretical influence*** | Labour process theory, Human Resource Management theory | Social psychology (in part) | Moral philosophy, whistle-blowing theory | Biology, personality psychology |
| **Central themes** | Employee influence, opinions, feedback | Psychological reactions, stereotypes | Convictions, ideals, ethics | Personality, psychological predispositions |
| **Management strategies*** | Dialogue and adjustment of planned changes | "Therapy" (to build acceptance for planned changes) | Dialogue and - if feasible - adjustment of planned changes | Dismissal or replacement of resistant employees |
| **Primary management goal with strategy** | Improved quality of decisions | Improved employee motivation | Improved ethics | Improved efficiency |

# Conclusions

A conceptual framework has been presented in this paper, depicting four interpretations of resistance to change. They are distinguished on the basis of two variables: The changeability of resistance and the emotionality of resistance. These interpretations are influenced by different theoretical fields, hold different themes as central and support different change management strategies. Empirical observations from two case studies indicate that there may be a dynamic dimension to the framework, to elaborate in future research.

Resistance remains a central theme in organization theory, and a framework to understand it has been lacking for a long time. The framework presented in this paper can facilitate communication on resistance over different theoretical strands. It aims at moving beyond a mere categorization of various expressions of resistance (e.g. Tucker, 1993), to focus more on the underlying assumptions about its nature. In this way, the framework can support advances in research on resistance and help improve our understanding of both the concept and the phenomenon.

The framework also allows us to question the theoretical influences that have formed the field of organization theory as well as the themes and assumptions that characterize these. For example, how has social psychology influenced our reasoning about resistance to change? This framework indicates that social psychology may have had a very strong influence, and that this may even have prevented us from recognizing alternative perspectives and interpretations.

Could it be, that it is time to reassess resistance in organization theory? Social psychology and the management perspective have been highly influential in this field. As a result, writings on resistance in organization theory have usually assumed a high degree of emotionality, positioning them on the right side of the diagram in the framework, Figure 1. For quite some time, especially Interpretation B has had a strong position in organization theory. For example, in theory mergers and acquisitions, it is common to talk about the merger syndrome (Buono & Bowditch, 1989; Marks & Mirvis, 1998). Buono and Bowditch (1989:11) describe this as "a highly defensive, fear-the-worst response to the uncertainties involved".

We would argue that it is time to reassess resistance. Today, the employee perspective is increasingly being emphasized in organization theory. This means that scholars must recognize that resistance must not be emotional, but legitimate (left side of the framework). This trend is further fuelled by a growing interest in ethics and whistle-blowing, and on highly skilled professions. In an article on mergers and acquisitions, Larsson, Eneroth and König (1996:105) asked themselves:

> Why should employees resist intended improvements of the organizational performance that is the basis of their livelihood? […] Or does the resistance stem from the irrational stability-proneness of the employees?

The second question articulates assumptions on resistance in accordance with Interpretation D. The authors themselves respond in the negative to this question and instead argue that reward systems tend to benefit stability and status quo. Greenwood, Hinings and Brown (1994) recognize that resistance may not be based on emotions, as in a case study they note the absence of stress, tension and anxiety. They explain that a key concern of managers was the possible effect of the merger on their careers, and note that this was not an emotional concern (p. 247f);

> But, even in this case, the language used hardly conveyed stress; career disturbance was more a recognized possible disadvantage.

In future research, it would be interesting to continue to develop the framework as a dynamic model, in order to understand how interpretations of resistance can change during the different phases of a change process. In this way, the attitudes of management, and not only of employees, can be focused on as a means of understanding communication problems and different change management strategies. The framework can also be used to compare interpretations of resistance in various contexts and different types of change processes.

# References

Avey, J., Wernsing, T. S., & Luthans, F. 2008. Can Positive Employees Help Positive Organizational Change? Impact of Psychological Capital and Emotions on Relevant Attitudes and Behaviors. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science,* 44 (1): 48-70

Bringselius, L. D. 2008. *Personnel resistance in public professional service mergers: The merging of two national audit organizations.* Lund: Lund Institute of Economic Research

Brown, R., & Gaertner, S. L. (eds.) 2001. *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Intergroup Processes. Cornwall,* UK: Blackwell Publishers Ltd

Buono, A., & Bowditch, J. 1989. *The Human Side of Mergers and Acquisitions – Managing Collisions Between People, Cultures and Organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Craine, K. 2007. Managing the Cycle of Change. *Information Management Journal,* 41 (5): 44-49

Cyert, R. M., & March, J. G. 1963. *A behavioral theory of the firm.* Englewood Cliffs (N.J): Prentice-Hall

*Dagens Socialförsäkring* (magazine from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency), 2006/06. How can we cope with the changeover? Page 19.

Dent, E. B., & Goldberg, S. G. 1999. Challenging "resistance to change". *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science,* 35: 25-41

Ford, J. D., & Ford, L. W. 2009. Decoding Resistance to Change. *Harvard Business Review*, 87 (4)

Ford, J. D., Ford, L. W., & D'Amelio, A. 2008. Resistance to change: The rest of the story. *Academy of Management Review,* 33: 362-377

Fulmer, R. M., & Gilkey, R. 1988. Blending corporate families: Management and organization development in a postmerger environment. Academy of Management Executive, 2(4):275-283 Greenwood, R., Hinings, C. R., & Brown, J. Merging Professional Service Firms. *Organization Science*, 5: 239-257

Hatfield, E., Cacioppo, J., & Rapson, R. 1994. *Emotional contagion.* Paris: Cambridge University Press

Hirschman, A. O. 1970. *Exit, voice, and loyalty : responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states.* Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press

Hodson, R. 1995. Worker resistance: An underdeveloped concept in the sociology of work. *Economic and Industrial Democracy,* 16(1): 79-111

*Human Resource Management International Digest.* 2009. Resistance to change needn't be futile: How employees' challenges can be beneficial, 17 (3): 32-34

Jasper, J. M. 1997. *The art of moral protest: Culture, biography, and creativity in social movements.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

Jermier, J. M., Knights, D., & Nord, W. R (eds.). 1994. *Resistance and power in organizations.* New York: Routledge

King, N., & Anderson, N. 1995. *Innovation and change in organizations.* London: Routledge

Knowles, E. S., & Linn, J. A. 2004. The importance of resistance to persuasion. In E. S. Knowles & J. A. Linn (Eds.), *Resistance and persuasion*: 3-9. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Larsson, L., Eneroth, K., & König, I. 1996. On the folly of rewarding domestic stability while hoping for international expansion. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 26(1): 105-134

Larsson, R. 1990. *Coordination of Action in Mergers and Acquisitions: Interpretive and Systems Approaches Towards Synergy.* Lund: Lund University Press

Löwendahl, B. R. 1997. *Strategic Management of Professional Service Firms.* Second Edition. Plantin: Copenhagen Business School Press

Maister, D. H. 1993. *Managing the Professional Service Firm.* New York: The Free Press.

Marks, M. L., & Mirvis, P. H. 1998. *Joining forces: making one plus one equal three in mergers, acquisitions, and alliances.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

McMahon, C. 1994. *Authority and Democracy: A General Theory of Government and Management.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press

Miceli, M. P., Near, J. P., & Morehead Dworkin, T. 2008. *Whistle-blowing in organizations.* New York: Routledge

Mintzberg, H. 1993. *Structure in fives: Designing effective organizations.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall

Piderit, S. K. 2000. Rethinking resistance and recognizing ambivalence: A multidimensional view of attitudes towards an organizational change. *Academy of Management Review,* 25: 783-794

Raelin, S. 1985. Managing Professionals. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

Rhenman, E. 1964. *Företagsdemokrati och företagsorganisation.* Stockholm: Norstedt & Söners förlag

*The Social Insurance Agency in Sweden.* FIA (Intranet). 17 Feb., 2009. Interview with Bo Ahrenfeldt on the change process at the agency (a reference to this article was also found in the magazine Dagens Socialförsäkring, 2009/02, p. 11)

Schein, E. H. 1985. *Organizational culture and leadership: A dynamic view.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass

Sharma, A. 1997. Professional as agent: knowledge asymmetry in agency exchange. *Academy of Management Review,* 22(3): 758-798

Sinetar, M. 1981. Mergers, morale and productivity. Personnel Journal, 60: 863-868

*SOU 2003:106* (governmental commission) "Försäkringskassan – Den nya myndigheten. Slutbetänkande från ANSA (utredningen angående socialförsäkringsadministrationen)". Statens offentliga utredningar.

Symon, G. 2005. Exploring resistance from a rhetorical perspective. *Organization Studies,* 26: 1641-1663

Tucker, J. 1993. Everyday forms of employee resistance. *Sociological Forum,* 8(1): 25-45

Varelius, J. 2008. Is Whistle-blowing Compatible with Employee Loyalty? *Journal of Business Ethics,* 85: 263-275

# School of Economics and Management
## Lund University

## Working Paper Series

### Editors: Hans Landström & Ulf Elg

| Year | No | Author | Title |
|------|-----|--------|-------|
| 2010 | 1 | Bringselius, Louise D. | Resistance to change: Four interpretations |
| 2009 | 10 | Altshuler, Liliya Tarnovskaya, Veronica | Branding Capability of Technology Born Globals |
| 2009 | 9 | Johansson, Magnus | Between chain and shop |
| 2009 | 8 | Karlsson, Tomas Elam, Amanda | What research matters? Factors that drive the impact of articles in journal of business venturing |
| 2009 | 7 | Karlsson, Tomas | Emergence and Development of Entrepreneurship Research 1989-2007: Key words and Collocations |
| 2009 | 6 | Oxelheim, Lars Gregoric, Aleksandra Randøy, Trond Thomsen, Steen | Internationalization of the firm and its board |
| 2009 | 5 | Oxelheim, Lars | Globalization, Transparency and Economic Growth: The Vulnerability of Chinese Firms to Macroeconomic Shocks |
| 2009 | 4 | Ostrup, Finn Oxelheim, Lars Wihlborg, Clas | Origins and Resolution of Financial Crises; Lessons from the Current and Northern European Crises |
| 2009 | 3 | Macheridis, Nikos | Agility in entrepreneurial projects |
| 2009 | 2 | Hallberg, Niklas L. | On relationship between economic rent and profit |
| 2009 | 1 | Alviniussen, Alf Jankensgård, Håkan | Enterprise Risk Budgeting – Bringing risk management into the financial planning process |
| 2008 | 14 | Alvesson, Mats Sandberg, Jörgen | Generating research questions through problematization |
| 2008 | 13 | Sandberg, Jörgen Alvesson, Mats | Routes to research questions: Beyond gap-spotting |
| 2008 | 12 | Spicer, Andre Alvesson, Mats Kärreman, Dan | Critical Performativity: The Unfinished Business of Critical Management Studies |
| 2008 | 11 | Campbell, Cynthia J. Chang, Rosita P. Doktor, Robert De Jong Jr., Jack C. Oxelheim, Lars Randøy, Trond | Executive Incentive Compensation and Economic Prosperity |

| 2008 | 10 | Forssbaeck, Jens<br>Oxelheim, Lars | Financial determinants of foreign direct investment |
|------|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2008 | 9 | Oxelheim, Lars,<br>Ghauri, Pervez N. | EU – China and the non-transparent race for inward FDI |
| 2008 | 8 | Artsberg, Kristina | A tax administration´s choice of accounting principles |
| 2008 | 7 | Ghauri, Pervez N.<br>Tarnovskaya, Veronika<br>Elg, Ulf | Market driving supplier strategy: A study of IKEA´s global sourcing network |
| 2008 | 6 | Tarnovskaya, Veronika<br>Elg, Ulf | The Specificity of Stakeholder Management in Market Driving |
| 2008 | 5 | Svensson, Peter<br>Kärreman, Dan | The Non-Impossibility of Empirical Findings: A new Language of Generalizations in Organizational Discourse Analysis |
| 2008 | 4 | Macheridis, Nikos<br>Knutsson, Hans | A framework to analyze organizational integration |
| 2008 | 3 | Oxelheim, Lars<br>Wihlborg, Clas<br>Zhang, Jianhua | Executive Compensation and Macroeconomic Fluctuations |
| 2008 | 2 | Jankensgård, Håkan | In Search of a Unifying Measure of Corporate Risk |
| 2008 | 1 | Nylinder, Pia<br>Anell, Anders | Mesuring 'Tight Budgetary Control' in Swedish Public Hospitals |
| 2007 | 3 | Cederström, Carl<br>Willmott, Hugh | Desiring Agency |
| 2007 | 2 | Jonsson, Anna | Knowledge Sharing at Micro Level: A Participant Observation<br>at IKEA in Japan |
| 2007 | 1 | Anselmsson, Johan<br>Johansson, Ulf | Are the retailer motives of private label brands fulfilled? – Creation of brand value, brand loyalty and the affect on store image and store loyalty |
| 2006 | 10 | Anselmsson, Johan<br>Johansson, Ulf | Innovation in the competition between retailer and manufacturer brands – An examination of new-product releases in the Swedish grocery sector |
| 2006 | 9 | Jonsson, Anna<br>Kalling, Thomas | Challenges to knowledge sharing across national and intra-organizational boundaries: A comparison of IKEA and SCA Packaging |
| 2006 | 8 | Macheridis, Nikos<br>Nilsson, Carl-Henric | Managing Project Complexity – a managerial view |
| 2006 | 7 | Macheridis, Nichos | Project selection from an ethical point of view |
| 2006 | 6 | Alvesson, Mats Kärreman, Dan<br>Sturdy, Andres Handley, Karen | Unpacking the Client(s): Constructions, Positions and Client-Consultant Dynamics |
| 2006 | 5 | Politis, Diamanto<br>Gabrielsson, Jonas | Entrepreneurial Decision Making: Examining Preferences for Causal and Effectual Reasoning in the New Creation Process. |
| 2006 | 4 | Anselmsson, Johan<br>Johansson, Ulf<br>Persson, Niklas | A conceptual framework for understanding Customer-based brand equity and price premium in grocery categories |
| 2006 | 3 | Alvesson, Mats Empson,<br>Laura | The Construction of Organizational Identity: Comparative Case Studies of Consulting Firms |
| 2006 | 2 | Fougère, Martin<br>Moulettes, Agneta | Development and Modernity in Hofstede´s *Culture´s Consequences*: A Postcolonial Reading |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2006 | 1 | Anselmsson, Johan | Customer perceived service quality in the supermarket and the discount store – Examination of a service quality measurement scale in a Swedish context |
| 2005 | 9 | Sveningsson, Stefan<br>Larsson, Magnus | Fantasies of leadership - identity work |
| 2005 | 8 | Norén, Catharina | The Social Construction of Successful Practical Selling - A study of how sales persons at CR Ltd construct selling as successful |
| 2005 | 7 | El-Ansary, Adel<br>Cerne, Annette | An Integrative Framework for Evolving A Socially Responsible Marketing Strategy |
| 2005 | 6 | Elg, Ulf | A study of inter-firm market orientation dimensions in Swedish, British and Italian supplier-retailer relationships |
| 2005 | 5 | Svensson, Peter | The Survival of the Unfittest: Delinquent corporations and the production of organisational legitimacy through symbolic-discursive fit. |
| 2005 | 4 | Erlingsdottír, Gudbjörg<br>Lindberg, Kajsa | Isomorphism, Isopraxism and Isonymism - Complementary or Competing Processes? |
| 2005 | 3 | Sanchez, Ron | Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning: Fundamental Concepts for Theory and Practice |
| 2005 | 2 | Tarnovskaya, Veronika<br>Elg, Ulf<br>Burt, Steve | The Role of Corporate Branding in a Market Driving Strategy |
| 2005 | 1 | Politis, Diamanto<br>Gabrielsson, Jonas | Exploring the Role of Experience in The Process of Entrepreneurial Learning |
| 2004 | 10 | Braunerhjelm, Pontus<br>Oxelheim, Lars<br>Thulin, Per | The Relationship Between Domestic and Outward Foreign Direct Investment: The Role of Industry-Specific Effects |
| 2004 | 9 | Alvesson, Mats<br>Hardy, Cynthia<br>Harley, Bill | Reflecting on Reflexive Practices in Organization and Management Theory |
| 2004 | 8 | Andrén, Niclas<br>Jankensgård, Håkan<br>Oxelheim, Lars | Exposure-Based Cash-Flow-at-Risk under Macroeconomic Uncertainty |
| 2004 | 7 | Macheridis, Nikos<br>Nilsson, Carl-Henric | Managing Project Complexity - a managerial view |
| 2004 | 6 | Stafsudd, Anna | The (Non-)Significance of Quantitative Management Research: The Demise of Popper in View of a Hypothesis-Verifying Publication Norm. |
| 2004 | 5 | Elg, Ulf<br>Jonnergård, Karin | Societal, Organizational and Individual Factors Influencing Women´s Entry to Professional Organizations |
| 2004 | 4 | Bengtsson, Anders | Exploring the Symbolic Dimension of Co-Branding: When Hershey Met Betty |
| 2004 | 3 | Elg, Ulf<br>Ghauri, Pervez<br>Sinkovics, Rudolf R. | A market and network based model for retailers´ foreign entry strategies |
| 2004 | 2 | Macheridis, Nikos | The Specific Costing Problems of Project Form – How those can be managed with activity based costing |
| 2004 | 1 | Holmqvist, Mikael<br>Larsson, Rikard | Interlevel Learning Dynamics: Balancing Exploitation and Exploration Within and Between Organizations |
| 2003 | 10 | Dedijer, Stevan | Development & Intelligence 2003-2053 |

| 2003 | 9 | Jonnergård, Karin<br>Kärreman, Mats<br>Svensson, Claes | The impact of changes in the corporate governance system on the boards of directors – experiences from Swedish companies |
|------|---|---|---|
| 2003 | 8 | Alvesson, Mats<br>Kärreman, Dan | Collectivity –a cultural and processual view |
| 2003 | 7 | Forsbæck, Jens<br>Oxelheim, Lars | Do Exchange-Rate Regimes Matter for Monetary-Policy Autonomy? The Experiences of 11 Small, Open European Economies in the 1980s and 1990s |
| 2003 | 6 | Kärreman, Dan<br>Alvesson, Mats | Understanding ethical closure in organizational settings - the case of media organizations |
| 2003 | 5 | Alvesson, Mats<br>Sveningsson, Stefan | Managers Doing Leadership: The extra-ordinarization of the Mundane |
| 2003 | 4 | Oxelheim, Lars<br>Rafferty, Michael | The quality of bond markets. The dynamic efficiency issue |
| 2003 | 3 | Schewe, Charles<br>Carlson, Benny | Age Matters. Segmenting Swedish Markets by Generational Cohorts |
| 2003 | 2 | Noble, Stephanie M.<br>Schewe, Charles D. | The Globalization of Values. A Comparison of the United States and the Kingdom of Jordan |
| 2003 | 1 | Sveningsson, Stefan<br>Alvesson, Mats | Managing Managerial Identities. Organizational Fragmentation Discourse and Identity Struggle |
| 2002 | 5 | Landström, Hans | Why do European Venture Capital Companies Syndicate? |
| 2002 | 4 | Oxelheim, Lars<br>Randøy, Trond | The Effect of Internationalization on CEO-Compensation |
| 2002 | 3 | Kalling, Thomas | Enterprise Resource Planning Systems: Strategic and Organisational Processes. |
| 2002 | 2 | Alvesson, Mats | 'Up-or-out' versus 'Fun-and-profit': A Study of Personnel Concepts and HR Themes in two IT/Management Consulting Firms. |
| 2002 | 1 | Johansson, Ulf | Information Technology in Supplier-Retailer Relationships. Some Possible Consequences |
| 2001 | 9 | Hedman, Jonas Kalling, Thomas | The Business Model: A Means to Understand the Business Context of Information and Communication Technology |
| 2001 | 8 | Andrén, Niclas<br>Oxelheim, Lars | Exchange-Rate and Interest-Rate Driven Competitive Advantages in the EMU. |
| 2001 | 7 | Oxelheim, Lars<br>Rafferty, Michael | On the Static Efficiency of Secondary Bond Markets. |
| 2001 | 6 | Elg, Ulf | Market Orientation in Retailing: An Approach Based on Inter- and Intra-Firm Activities |
| 2001 | 5 | Stavsudd, Anna | Managers in the Context of Strategic Content – Industrial Organization Theory and Resource-Based view Predictions for the Selection of Managers |
| 2001 | 4 | Johansson, Ulf | Food Retail Buying Processes. A Study of UK, Italy and Sweden |
| 2001 | 3 | Johansson, Ulf | Retail Buying; Process, Information and IT use. A Conceptual Framework |
| 2001 | 2 | Alvesson, Mats<br>Willmott, Hugh | Identity Regulation as Organizational Control: Producing the Appropriate Individual (published in Journal of Management Studies, Vol 39 (5): pp 619-644, 2002) |
| 2001 | 1 | Oxelheim, Lars<br>Randøy, Trond | The Impact of Foreign Board Membership on Firm Value: A Study of Corporate Governance in Scandinavia. (Forthcoming in Journal of Banking and Finance |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2000 | 9 | Oxelheim, Lars<br>Wihlborg, Claes | Recognizing Macroeconomic Fluctuations in Value Based Management. (Forthcoming in Journal of Applied Corporate Finance.) |
| 2000 | 8 | Elg, Ulf | The Meaning and Antecedents of Market Orientation in a Distribution Network |
| 2000 | 7 | Alvesson, Mats<br>Due-Billing, Yvonne | Beyond Body-counting - a Discussion of the Social Construction of Gender at Work, with the Scandinavian Public Sector as an Example. |
| 2000 | 6 | Alvesson, Mats | Knowledge Work: Ambiguity, Image and Identity (Published in Human Relations,vol 54 (7): pp 863-886, 2001) |
| 2000 | 5 | Sveningsson, Stefan | Strategy as a Disciplinary Technology. Discursive Engineering in the Newspaper World |
| 2000 | 4 | Larsson, R<br>Lubatkin, M | Achieving Acculturation in Mergers and Acquisitions: A Case Survey Study |
| 2000 | 3 | Henriksson, K | When Communities of Practice Came to Town. On Culture and Contradiction in Emerging Theories of Organizational Learning. |
| 2000 | 2 | Eneroth, K<br>Malm, Allan, T | Strategic Identity. Visions as Catalysts for Competence Dynamics (published in Advances in Applied Business Strategy, vol 6A (2000) pp: 121-146) |
| 2000 | 1 | Alvesson, Mats<br>Johansson, Anders W | Professionalism and Politics in Management Consultancy Work (forthcoming in T Clark & R Fincham (eds): Critical Consulting: Perspectives on the Management Advice Industry. Oxford: Blackwell) |
| 1999 | 5 | Elg, Ulf<br>Johansson, Ulf | The Contributions of International Alliances when Managing the Firm's Set of Interorganizational Dependencies. (Published in the Journal of Strategic Marketing, 9 pp 93-110 2001) |
| 1999 | 4 | Alvesson, Mats | Methodology for Close up Studies. Struggling with Closeness and Closure |
| 1999 | 3 | Alvesson, Mats | Beyond Neo-Positivists, Romantics and Localists. A Reflexive Approach to Interviews in Organization Research |
| 1999 | 2 | Pushkala, Prasad,<br>Birdsell, Judith M<br>Zerbe, Wilfred | Translated Myths: The Mirroring of Institutional Expectations in the Formal Structure of the Canadian Breast Cancer Research Initiative (CBCRI) |
| 1999 | 1 | Oxelheim, Lars,<br>Stonehill, Arthur<br>Randøy, Trond | Finance-Specific Factors and Theories of Foreign Direct Investment (Published in International Business Review, Vol. 10, (4), 2001) |