Exploring Clients' Mental Workspace through Cognitive Interviewing

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In order to do good cognitive interviewing, one needs to grasp three theories that together define clients' mental workspace. It is this mental workspace which is explored through the cognitive interview, using DTF, the Dialectical Thought Form Framework. The workspace is pictured in two-dimensional form in the Three Houses diagram. To make the best use of this diagram, knowledge of the theories "behind" each House is most helpful.
See especially p. 10 forward.

Volume 2 of Measuring Hidden Dimensions
Section 3, Chapter 9
The Anatomy of the Internal Workplace

Section Introduction

Foundational thinking is hard to find in the business literature. The deep assumptions about human beings and the world its writers make never get unearthed outside of rare exceptions such as E. Schein (1998). As a result, the literature is blind in many ways, including culture-blind, never stepping out of the frame of reference that defines daily work in the particular culture it is written for. As in coaching, the urge to "serve" is prematurely engaged in, before the client (or customer) one wants to serve is really understood. (Opinion surveys and MBTI "preferences" are a poor cousin of real insight into employees and customers.)

This observation led me in Section I to introduce a theory of work and of organizations. I wanted to create foundations on which to build insight into the functioning of organizations and ways of managing the human resource function (including customers). To make some of the assumptions taken for granted in business literature more transparent, in Section II I focused attention on work as a crucial medium of adult development, especially cognitive development. I showed that the complexity of work people encounter provides them with a major challenge to develop their reflective judgment and discretion. I demonstrated that varying with the time span of the role in which they deliver work, individuals are challenged to evolve their epistemic and social-emotional stance and adopt more complex thinking tools.

Business thinking is deeply anchored in the Second, not the Third, Order of Mental Complexity. One way to get at the deep assumptions embodied in this thinking is to distinguish between two architectures on which all organizations are based. I call them henceforth the *Human Capability Hierarchy* (HCH) and the *Managerial Accountability Hierarchy* (MAH), respectively.

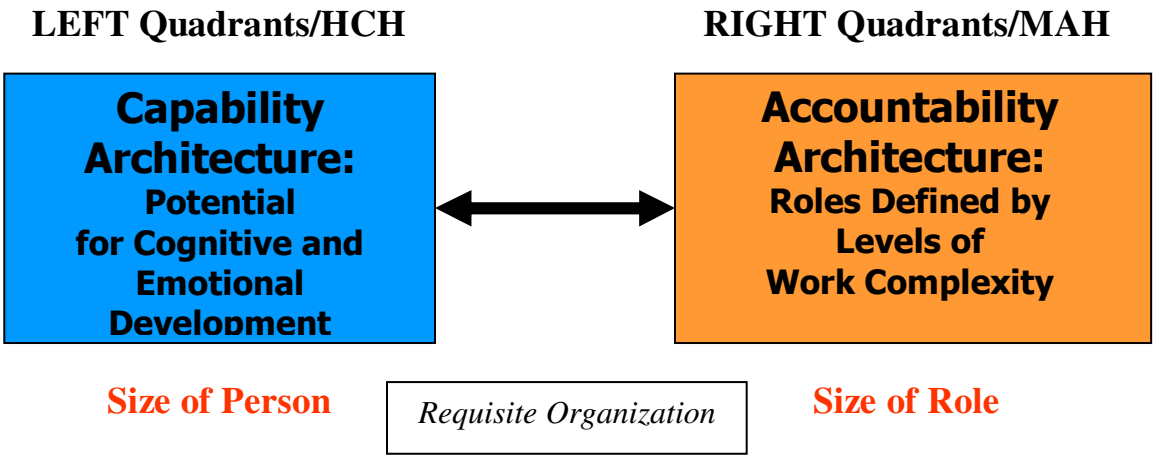

Fig. 9.1 The Two Architectures Organizations Are Built On

The MAH has been most lucidly analyzed by Elliot Jaques for over thirty years. As a follower of Piaget (1970, 1972), he restricted himself to the development of formal logical thinking, neglecting

both epistemic and social-emotional stance, not to speak of dialectical tools (1994). My task here is to lay bare the structure of the HCH architecture he only implied, and to do so by going beyond its purely cognitive dimension addressed by Jaques as *current potential capability*. In this way, I plan to arrive at a broader picture of the nature of work and ultimately, better strategies for managing human resources.

In this section, then, I introduce a conceptual framework for understanding the HCH more comprehensively and at a deeper level than is presently common. The foundational topic as I see it is *how adults internally construct their workplace,* rather than what they do once they project the internal workplace they have internally constructed into some physical venue in which they can be observed to deliver work.

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When we distinguish between the *inner* and the *outer* workplace, it becomes evident that the way people conceive of, and carry out, work is primarily a developmental, not a competence, issue. Two people with the same competences will carry out their work very differently as a function of their developmental profile. People approach and pursue tasks and link their work to the organizational environment in terms of their Professional Agenda, and this agenda is an expression of the *inner workplace* and has little to do with the outer one. In fact, the outer work place is construed in terms of the inner one.

In this section, then, I deepen the reader's understanding of Chapters 2 and 3, using the means and tools provided by the intervening chapters. In order to be as precise as possible about the anatomy of the Human Capability Architecture, I introduce the metaphor of the *Three Houses*. The Three Houses detail how an individual's potential capability flows into work. Each House represents a mental space in which work is constructed in terms that are dependent on the individual's evolving self as well as cognitive profile. Therefore one can view the Houses as *hypotheses* for understanding more deeply the Human Capability Architecture, in contrast to the MAH. As any hypothesis, it requires empirical verification.

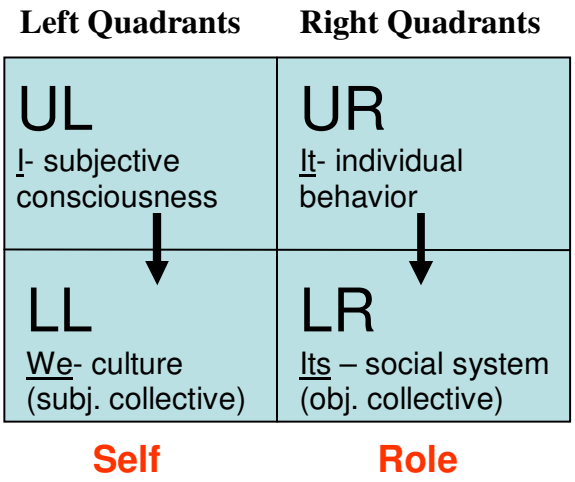
For this reason, in Chapter 11 (after speaking more generally about dialectical thinking in the workplace in Chapter 10), I show empirically, based on a recorded cognitive interview, how an employee called Donald actually constructs his inner workplace, and how he brings his Professional Agenda to bear on his external workplace in a financial services firm. Chapter 12 outlines how to administer cognitive interviews expertly, in such a way as to lay bare an employee's or manager's epistemic stance and cognitive tools. Chapter 13 extends the topic of cognitive interviewing – a priceless tool for talent management and leadership development – to the more general issue of how to use dialectical thought forms as *Mind Openers* in order to challenge one's own and others' thinking.

Based on Section III, the final section, IV, drives the topic of adult development further into applications such as *Human Sigma* (Chapter 14) and *Capability Metrics* (Chapter 15).

<u>Chapter Introduction</u>

By *Anatomy of the HCH*, I mean the structural foundations based on which one can speak of organizations in a left-quadrant kind of way (in the sense of Wilber). The two left quadrants, namely, the Upper Left (UL) and Lower Left one (LL), comprise all intentional (UL) and cultural (LL) mental processing humans engage in. When we look more deeply into how human beings orient

themselves in the social world, not only of organizations, it becomes apparent that they first consult their own subjective consciousness (which they are subject to rather than in control of; Kegan, 1982). Later in this chapter, I refer to this consultation as taking place in the *Self House*, distinguishing it from two other mental spaces, the *Task House* and the *Organizational House* (see Figure 9.5).



Legend: UL = upper left: LL = lower left: UR = upper right: LR = lower right

Fig. 9.2 The Mental Space of Work
Viewed in Terms of the Four Wilber Quadrants

Both in preparation of and at work, in the Task House individuals focus on their role and tasks, thereby extending the Human Capability Hierarchy into the Upper Right quadrant (UR) where their *role*, not their self, is in focus. Role is defined within the Managerial Accountability Architecture of organizations (MAH). In the upper right quadrant (UR), we encounter the individual's observed behavior objectively considered. Today's organizations use sophisticated assessment instruments by which such behavior is quantified and used in performance management and other HR practices.

Having spoken of the individual as self and as player of roles, where do we find the organization itself? It is found in the two lower quadrants, namely, a conjunction of the subjective (LL) and objective (LR) collective. In LL, we encounter *culture*, an integral analytic aspect of any social system. When we say that individuals "work" we are locating them in both the upper left and lower left quadrants *simultaneously*. The culture quadrant (LL) is paramount in organizational work since it comprises the world views, standards, values, and norms that underlie organizational decision making on all levels.

The striking fact is that the notion of an *organization* comprises at first sight two incommensurable quadrants, the *soft* quadrant (LL) of culture and the *hard* quadrant of an objectified organizational collective (LR). This poses the question of *how the quantifiable right quadrant of the objective collective (LR) can be harmonized with the intangible left quadrant of culture (LL), in such a way that individuals' subjective consciousness (UL) is optimally channeled into work behavior (UR) and loyalty to the organization (LL).*

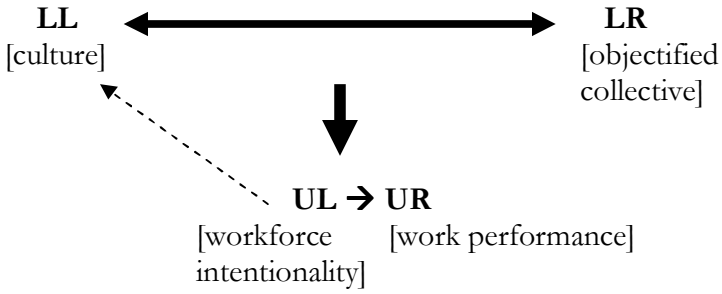


Fig. 9.3 The Central Issue of Organizational Management

By *harmonizing LL and LR* more is meant than a relationship between just two of the four quadrants. All quadrants together form a *system*. Therefore, what in the figure I have called *workforce intentionality* – the underlying proclivity to work stratified in terms of developmental levels – is a major force in the dynamics of any organization or institution.

Figure 9.3, above, points to the following important verities about work:

1. The way a person *plays* an organizational role depends on the self (UL) that is the carrier of the role (UR), and is thus a developmental issue, not simply a performance issue.
2. The self, at home in the left quadrants, has a more or less close relationship with the role it has been assigned in the upper right quadrant.
3. In organizational circumstances, role counts more than self.
4. A worker's *professional agenda* falls into both the UL and LL quadrants, being based on the self's meaning and sense making, which is embedded in a particular culture.
5. A worker's role is based on an organizational agreement in LL, and how it is played depends on the worker's applied, as well as potential, capability in UL.
6. The worker's role behavior can be measured. It is part of the UR quadrant and thus falls into MAH.
7. Measuring role behavior without taking into account its root in subjective consciousness (UL) is no more than an expedient that deeply masks the role carriers' developmental profile. From this masking derive all human resources issues.
8. Organizational management is complex because it cannot be reduced to the right quadrants (UR, LR) but equally comprises both lower quadrants, thus partaking of the worker's self as well as role (not to speak of the manager's self and role by which the subordinate in part defines him- or herself, depending on developmental level).

<u>The Arbitrariness of Sociological Distinctions</u>

In light of the above, it is easy to understand why the Human Capability Hierarchy (HCH) is not in the foreground of workers' and managers' awareness, and in most cases not even on the professional agenda of Human Resources departments. For one thing, the HCH is *invisible*, constituted as it is by the left quadrants in Wilber's sense. It is an *intangible asset* that comes to light only in developmental – not in behavioral – interviewing. In terms of culture, "seeing" the HCH is made difficult by the handy use of common sense sociological classifications that pervade business thinking and writing in the Second Order of Mental Complexity.

The conventional way of thinking about organizations is to focus entirely on the Managerial Accountability Hierarchy. This focus suggests separating different groups of people as *employees*, *managers/executives*, and *customers*. What is forgotten in using such formal logical categories is that the human systems composing an organization *together* form a transformational system that is in constant flux in both the MAH and HCH dimension. Harmonizing the two architectures is therefore a challenge for formal logical thinking.

Among the main things typically forgotten when thinking and writing about organizations are the following issues:

1. Individuals of all three categories "work" in the sense of exercising reflective judgment and discretion.
2. The level of reflective judgment and discretion gradually increases over the lifespan but remains deeply stratified developmentally.
3. Role distinctions do not capture the evolving self's ongoing progression toward higher social-emotional, epistemic, and cognitive levels.
4. All members of the workforce have a measurable potential capability irrespective of their present role and their competences that permit them to move from one group to another, or out of these groups entirely.

From an HCH-focused point of view, then, there is no empirical evidence justifying the segregation of people into three different, largely unrelated behavioral systems. Their commonality is not only one of the human condition and thus indisputable, but is a developmental one at the same time (which is part of the human condition).

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Local Performance Bands [of Teams]</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Performance [Differences]</td></tr>
<tr><td>Employees*</td><td>Managers</td><td>Customers …</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">"Competences, Talents, Experiences …"</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Cognitive Development</td><td>Social-Emotional Development</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">ADULT CONSCIOUSNESS/CAPABILITY</td></tr>
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Fig. 9.4 Behavioral Differences between Groups share the Common Ground of Adult Development

As indicated, all individuals who deliver work – except where child labor is used – are adults. They make meaning at a particular social-emotional level and make sense in a specific phase of thought development. According to their developmental profile (dominant in the Self House), they use their competences, employ their talents, and make sense of their experiences. Whether they are employees, managers, or customers, their performance differences are manifestations of the extent to which their potential capability has evolved into being applied capability. Depending on the physical locality in which they deliver work, individuals and groups differ in quality of work. Consequently, they are situated in different performance bands, even within one and the same company (Fleming and Asplund, 2007; see Chapter 14).

The pervasive absence of thinking in terms of the HCH from the minds of business people becomes especially clear when one probes their thinking about human resources management. The following

quote from Fleming and Asplund (2007, 17-18) speaks to the fact that a prevailing business strategy such as SixSigma (e.g., Pyzdek, 2003) can color thinking about organizations, not only in manufacturing but the service industries. A large car dealer is reported to have pronounced this verdict on the fallibility of human beings:

> I understand what you are telling me (about the importance of the human factor) – I really do. But the truth is, if I could get rid of every, single human touch point we have with our customers, I would. *Every interaction one of our employees has with a customer is a chance for something to go wrong.*
>
> Online reservations and self-serve machines are just much more efficient and cost-effective. They always show up for work, they never complain, they don't have bad days, and they don't make mistakes. I am looking forward to the day when the only person a customer sees is the guy in the security booth when they drive the car off the lot. And even he is still one employee too many.

Even the influence of the Upper Right quadrant (UR) on profitability is here seen as pernicious for the functioning of the objectified collective (LR) with which the organization is identified. Human potential is being degraded to nothingness by highly formalistic thinking, critically addressed by TF #17 (critique of reductionism).

Empirical Evidence

I have proposed that the metaphor of the *Three Houses* – Self House (UL), Task House (UR), and Organizational House (LL+LR) – can illuminate the anatomy of the Human Capability Hierarchy (HCH). To demonstrate this proposal, let us consider two examples that show stark differences in how two individuals, or the same individual at different developmental levels, make(s) sense of his self (UL) versus his role (UR) in the context of work.

Example 1 (adapted from Lahey et al., 1988)

I really want to get a better salary. Therefore I am really sad that my colleague lied to me. As a newcomer to this environment I had asked him how much of a difference it really makes if you work hard around here as regards your salary. But it is clear to me now that he lied to me when he said it didn't matter much. Now that I know he lied I can never be sure whether he's telling me the truth. This makes me sad since I feel he let me down. We've always promised to tell the truth to each other, and he didn't follow through with that. So now I don't know if I can count on him. And I don't know why he did lie to me, or why he might again. Like maybe he lied because of something I did or said that made him angry. Of course I wouldn't have done whatever it was that made him angry had I known he would lie to me. I would then always remember that I have to keep certain things to myself or risk being lied to. And although that would be awfully burdensome, I would do the best I can to keep myself safe in controlling what I say.

The speaker argues on the basis of a social-emotional two-world hypothesis according to which he lives in one world, and his colleague in another. The latter's internal world is entirely opaque to the speaker. There is no interest in exploring the colleague's reason for lying, except for the hunch that he might have lied because of anger toward the speaker. No attempt is made to explore this hunch further.

The speaker's stance is close to the instrumental (S-2) stage social-emotionally and indicative of epistemic position 3 where knowledge is assumed to be absolutely certain or at best temporarily uncertain. Accordingly, the speaker's cognitive tools are those of very concrete, factual thinking along formal logical lines. The colleague addressed is seen and treated as an instrument of keeping

oneself safe, and truth is *a right answer*. The speaker's expectation is that a person knowing the organizational environment would also know "the truth" about salaries paid therein. If that truth is not revealed, a lie is spoken. (Once a liar, always a liar.)

The consequences of this combined epistemic, social-emotional, and cognitive stance for the speaker's Professional Agenda are predictable. The speaker's *internal workplace* is primarily a place for him to get his needs and desires met in the easiest way possible and with least effort. In the *Task House*, no inner standards for serving a particular function exist except for the expressed expectations of others, and these expectations will be scrutinized for their pliability regarding the speaker's immediate needs. As a result, the *Organizational House* is constructed based on low-level thinking about human resources.

Example 2 (adapted from Lahey et al., 1988)
I have just been gathering data for the decision I and my boss have to make, rather than going ahead with the decision on my own, or waiting for the boss to come in. He really prefers to delegate, and I just didn't take up the challenge to make a decision on my own. But now I realize that he really doesn't mind if I make a decision that has to be made, and that he really likes me to do that because then he doesn't feel as if he's depriving me of authority, or as if he really should be making the decision. Before, it really was a strain between us, because we didn't get to make decisions as much as I really found necessary and wanted to, or else I harassed him about making the decision, and then felt guilty about it. Making the decision by myself occasionally makes both of us happier, and even makes things between us a lot smoother.

The second speaker has matured social-emotionally from his initial stance (articulated in Example 1) a decade or so ago. He is now able to identify with his *internalized Other*, the boss, and in fact is entirely one with this Other. ("I and my boss" precisely expresses this social-emotional identity.) In the excerpt, the speaker focuses on his role as a decision maker subordinate to his Other, the boss. He vividly demonstrates how an individual at his developmental level is focused on the role in favor of the self, unable to tell the two apart.

The relationship of self and role in the excerpt is not conflictual as much as it is confused. The self is experienced as something that has trouble going along with the role against which it is measured, as it were. This is so since it does not yet define itself by internal standards that could guide its actions. The speaker's self has to cope with various shifting insights, most of which are insights into what is taken to be "himself." However, these insights are being projected into the Other, the boss. While this projection dissolves the two-world hypothesis, it introduces an uneasy merger of the two worlds, his own and that of the Other. Being subject to his developmental level, the speaker cannot see this. Consequently he does not realize how enmeshed Self and Role actually are. He truly lives "within the confines of the professional role" (Haber, 1996, 20-21), more so than a self-authoring individual would who would *have,* rather than *be*, his role.

The second excerpt also says a lot about how the speaker constructs the *Task House*, specifically how he understands his own function and authority from which his role as a decision maker flows. Personal process clearly dominates task process, which does not bode well for the effectiveness of decisions the speaker is apt to make (Schein, 1998).
The speaker internally constructs his boss as someone who likes to delegate and therefore does not mind if somebody else makes decisions that need to be made for him (which, of course, also says a lot about the structural ambiguity of the organizational environment implied). The boss appears as a soft-hearted wimp who feels he is depriving others of their authority if he makes decisions himself, and thus as someone for whom decision making is generally difficult. The speaker therefore gives the boss a helping hand. He congratulates himself for occasionally making decisions by himself (and

for the boss), and feels that his doing so improves the relationship with his boss. Both of them like the division of labor they have silently adopted. Because of this silent truce, there is no further need to harass the boss (who is very busy) or feel guilty about being a bad employee.

In cognitive terms, the second speaker's epistemic position is a transitional one between epistemic positions 4 and 5.

Epistemic Position [Stage of Reflective Judgment]	**Assumptions about Knowledge and Truth**	**Approximate Social-Emotional Stage**
4 Understanding ("quasi-reflective") *Phase 1 of Dialectical Thinking*	Knowledge and truth are *abstractions* idiosyncratic to the knower; thus characterized by ambiguity and relativity.	S-2/3 to S-3
5 *Phase 2 of Dialectical Thinking*	Abstract mapping skills allow for comparing and contrasting of abstractions across contexts but without holding an integrated view of different domains.	S-3(4) to S-4(3)

Table 9.1 Characteristics of Epistemic Positions 4 and 5

Of course, not knowing the true state of mind of others such as the boss makes for ambiguity. Consequently, knowledge is uncertain and knowledge claims thus idiosyncratic. Use of abstractions such as *strain* in "there was a strain between us because we didn't get to make decisions …" remains tentative and hypothetical, and the process of using abstractions only slightly transcends the speaker's immediate experience. When comparing an earlier state to the present one as two different contexts – "before, it really was a strain between us" – the speaker is beginning to compare and contrast abstractions – the situation then and now – thereby signaling he is on the move to epistemic position 5. In harmony with this position, the speaker's cognitive tools are still largely those of formal logic (as in epistemic position 4 or Phase 1 of dialectical thinking).

The speaker apparently has no structural insight into the common ground he shares with the internally constructed boss. Thus there is no awareness of constructing the boss in terms of a constitutive relationship that defines his identity (TF #21). No relational or transformational thought form is yet on the horizon. There is, however, some process thinking in terms of TF #5 [practical/active character of knowledge] and context-bound thinking in terms of TF #8 [contextualization of part within a whole with emphasis on the part]. The speaker holds forth on collaborations with the boss with an emphasis on his taking the lead in making decisions. In declaring that the speaker occasionally makes decisions himself presumably approved by the boss, there is an inkling of TF #12 [the stability of systems functioning] in the sense that such decisions uphold the stability of the system in which both the speaker and his boss are embedded, and bring about a certain equilibrium (TF #9). This stability extends to that of the speaker's own system as a person. Overall, the speaker describes Relationship intricacies in terms of Context thought forms (especially TF #10), with a very weak understanding of Process. Since the speaker's cognitive profile largely determines his Professional Agenda, it also determines the level of his performance quite regardless of the quality of his competences, educational background or "interest in the work" (Jaques' "*V*" as a component of applied capability; see Chapter 2).

The professional stance of the second speaker is more mature than demonstrated in Example 1. Speaker 2 more deeply owns his Professional Agenda. It is more removed from immediate needs and desires, and is built upon others' expectations. Therefore, the roles and tasks deriving from his function in the workplace are no longer entirely dependent on external standards provided by unknown others (as in Example 1). They are rather defined by the well-understood expectations of specific others, and the speaker's engagement with these expectations reflects a deeper socialization and identification with the organizational environment, as well as more highly developed personal meaning making in the Self House.

As the two examples show, we encounter in the Self House a complex amalgamation of:

- social-emotional stance
- epistemic position
- phase of dialectical thinking, both in terms of stance and tools

These developmental determinants are quite independent of the individual's applied capability in terms of which skilled knowledge, motivation at work, and temperamental difficulties would matter (see Chapter 2). When we move in to disentangle the fusion of these different lines of adult development, rich insights regarding the quality of work a manager or employee is presently capable of await us. We can then predict to a large extent how the individual involved will play his roles in the Task House, and what the internal workplace looks like for him in terms of the Organizational House.

The Three Houses of Work

Intrinsic to the notion of the Three Houses in CDF is the notion that it is beneficial to distinguish between an individual's *internal* and *external* workplace. The former is the blueprint according to which behavior is exercised in physical and social work venues. The internal workplace is developmentally as well as psychologically determined. In CDF, it is the focus of the cognitive interview, demonstrated in Chapter 11. In light of Chapter 8 it makes sense to say that the internal workplace is equally determined by the *implicit* dialectic of social emotional development and the *explicit* dialectic of cognitive development. In fact, it coordinates both dialectics in a more or less *requisite* organization overlaid by the organization's own culture that coordinates HCH and MAH.

Any kind of work, conceived of as the exercise of reflective judgment and discretion in the pursuit of goals within certain time limits, takes place in a *mental space* of some kind**.** This space is the work space in which *moves-in-thought* occur that underlie performance, decision making, and the exercise of talent. In each of the three human systems – employees, managers/executives, customers – the mental space of work is experienced differently, depending on the focus of attention privileged in each. But all mental workspaces, based as they are on human consciousness, have the same developmental structure of unfolding cognitive and social-emotional potential which lays them more or less open to focused intervention at the individual or group/team level.

In most cases the mental space of work is structured to exclude both the First and the Fourth Orders of Complexity (see Chapter 3). The first order is not complex enough for human work, and the latter is not reached by enough people to be significant in terms of performance. While animals and infants, forming part of the First Order, can be said to "work" (Jaques, 2002), they stand outside of the "language-suffused" world that characterizes the other three orders. Beyond the Third Order, where Practical Wisdom reigns, work is close to play and therefore is not focused on "performance"

but rather on creating surprise and initiating self-transformation. As a result, the Orders of Complexity central to work are the Second and Third Orders (Stratum I-IV and V-VIII, respectively; see Chapter 3).

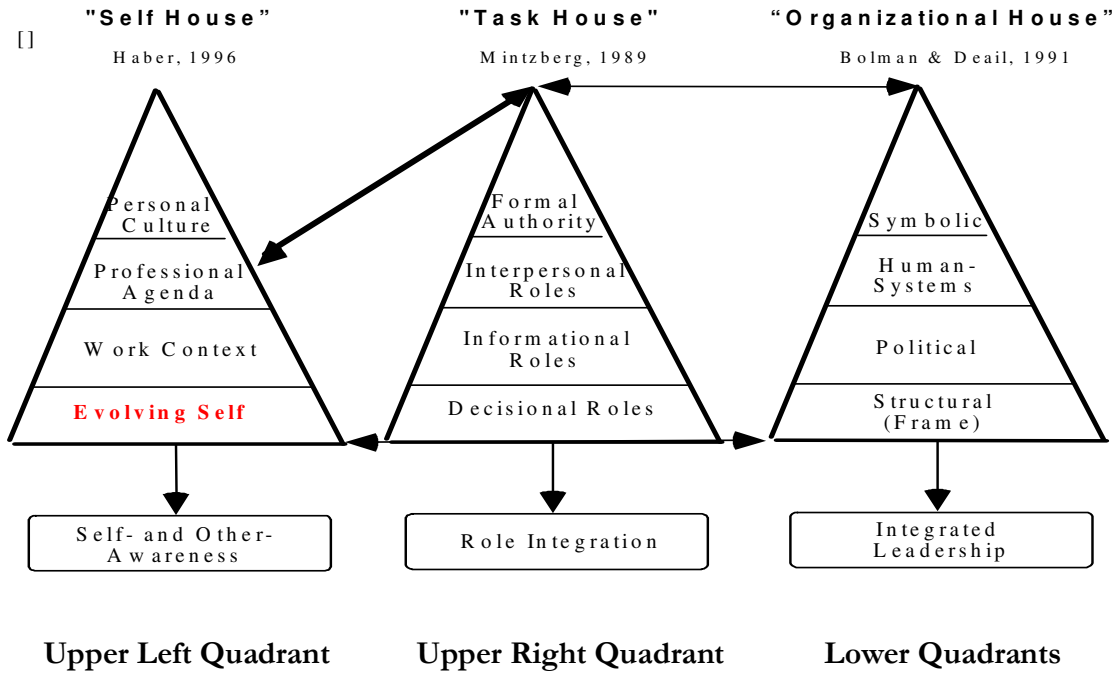

Fig. 9.5 The Three Houses in Detail

In Figure 9.5 the *mental space of work* is partitioned into three relatively independent spaces, namely the Self House, the Task House, and the Organizational (Environmental) House.
As the bold arrow on the left of the figure indicates, the way Task and Organizational House are constructed by organization members ultimately points back to their Self House, the way they presently make meaning and sense of their own life and work. All that can be known and said by an individual about his or her roles, tasks, professional agenda, and relation to an organization, is the result of a mental process firmly anchored in the individual's *subjective consciousness* (UL).

The Self House comprises each individual's professional agenda, that is, the goals to pursue and values to realize. The Task House is focused on an individual's role which may be more or less complex depending on the time span of the role. The Organizational House comprises the relationship of an individual's work within the larger social environment, minimally within a peer group or particular business unit. In light of this, we can assign Wilber's quadrants to the Houses as follows:

- Self House: Upper left quadrant (UL)
- Task House: Upper right quadrant (UR)
- Organizational House: Lower left and right quadrants (LL and LR)

The Houses thus outline the inner workplace in which an individual's performance at work takes place. Whether they are managers, employees, or customers, individuals are acting from within the Self House, extended into the Task and Organizational House (see the interview analysis in Chapter 11). From this vantage point, an "organization" is the *creation of its members' social-emotional meaning*

making and cognitive sense making combined. It is something they *design* based on their thinking and personal values as a function of their level of adult development. The organization is a structure that guides individuals in answering two questions simultaneously:

- What should I do and for whom? (social emotional)
- What can I know and do, and what are my options? (cognitive)

Once the organization has been designed internally, organization members "walk into" their design as if it were something outside of them. This is an epistemological illusion (mirage). In reality, they stay right where they are, namely wherever they position themselves developmentally, their applied capability – competences, talents, experiences, etc. – notwithstanding.

There are of course large content differences – in contrast to structural differences – between how employees, managers, and customers experience the Three Houses. This is because they follow different professional agendas in their Self Houses. This even holds for customers. Customer relationships are determined by how employees and management view customers as members of the organization and convey this view to customers. Wherever customers are not part of an individual's professional agenda in the Self House, they simply do not exist.

In what way customers *themselves* construct their Organizational House will depend on several factors:

- Customer's developmental profile (e.g., their need to identify with a company in order to boost their self-image or keep up with internalized others).
- Customer's cognitive ability to think in process and relationship terms rather than only in terms of products that objectify their relationship to a company.
- The degree to which company management understands limits of separation between employee and customer relationships, recognizing it as an illusion created by formal logical classification (see Chapter 14).
- The degree to which company management has successfully integrated employee and customer relationships in terms of the *Requisite Organization* of MAH and HCH.

Difference of Emphasis in the Houses

Each of the "floors" of the Houses can be described in terms of its individual subdivisions, or "floors" (Laske, 1999b). Initially, it is important to understand the particular emphasis each House carries. This can be gleaned from the guide questions in the cognitive interview (Chapter 11):

- **Self House:** what is your motivation for engaging in the work you are doing here?
- **Task House:** what are the roles that flow from your present function in this environment (and what tasks do they entail)?
- **Organizational House:** how does your work fit into the larger organizational environment in which you find yourself?

Accordingly, one can distinguish in each of the Three Houses a different point of emphasis:

- **Self House:** Self-awareness and awareness of others.
- **Task House:** Integration of self and role.
- **Organizational House:** Ability to take multiple perspectives on the organization.

In the Self House, individuals articulate their relationship to themselves and others. Therefore, their degree of self-awareness in the sense of social-emotional development plays a central role in this

House. In the Task House, the overall focus falls on the integration of two aspects of an individual worker, namely Self and Role, which do not always live in an easy relationship with each other. Complexity of cognitive profile is central for achieving this integration. While typically the role receives more attention than the self, the self may fail in his or her role due to lack of peer or managerial attention.

As Haber points out (1996, 21):

> The role receives more credence than the self. … The self is frequently left to manage on its own and consequently is more primitive, unconscious, unconventional, and mysterious than the professional role. The self uses the language of dreams, metaphors, feelings, symbols, intuition, and physiological responses to represent its reality.

Because of this, the fact that the Self *as a knower* engages with thought forms to construct and interpret the world is of the highest importance. Thought forms are high-level abstractions that bridge the gap between the self ego-centrically immersed in itself and the accountability of the professional role. The way dialectical thought forms are used decides how emotions are experienced, interpreted, and put to use, and whether meaning-making conflicts can be successfully reframed or not (Basseches, 1997 a/b).

Thought forms also provide the unifying social platform (beyond shared feelings and neuropsychological patterns) on which encounters between self and role, self and organization, and employee and customer can occur. Wherever thought form use is not part of an analysis of organizations or of society, *reductionism* in terms of TF #17, whether in the form of *subjectivism, pluralism, or formalism,* takes over (Adorno, 1999). This is one of the main insights demonstrated in Frankfurt School writings including those by Habermas.

Changes in Individual's Organizational Perspective

As indicated on the "bottom floor" of the Self House in Figure 9.5, an adult's professional agenda is ultimately determined by the quality of her social-emotional and cognitive self (Size of Person). The way in which the Three Houses are actually constructed by adults based on the Self House has important consequences for how an individual's work gets done and is fused with broader organizational efforts. The table below spells out the dependency of an adult's organizational frame of reference further, by pointing to developmentally expectable changes in:

- View of organizations
- View of management level
- View of customers
- Level of organizational learning

The predictions made by the table about employees have little to do with what employees *have* – namely, their skilled knowledge (competences), interest in the work, etc. – or even their company-assigned role (Size of Role). They have everything to do with what employees *are* in terms of their level of social-emotional and cognitive growth (Size of Person).

For instance, as long as employees view others, such as customers (row 5), as mere "revenue channels" or "a constituency to be catered to" (Phase 1 and 2 of dialectical thinking), without being

able to imagine their feeling and thinking, employee-customer relationships remain largely undeveloped despite training. Employees' at low levels of cognitive development show low systemic thinking. It is only beginning in Phase 3 of dialectical thinking – Stage S-4 of social-emotional development – that truly professional work can be expected of adults, including professional relationships with customers.

Organizational Frames of Reference				
Phase of development of thinking	**Second Order of Complexity**		**Third Order of Complexity**	
	Phase 1 of Dialectical Thinking	Phase 2 of Dialectical Thinking	Phase 3 of Dialectical Thinking	Phase 4 of Dialectical Thinking
Social-emotional Level*	Stage 2 [instrumental]	Stage 3 [other-dependent]	Stage 4 [self-authoring]	Stages > 4 [self-aware]
View of organizations	Institutions to "walk into"	Assemblages of people & materials	Interpersonal networks	Self-transforming organisms based on human agency
View of management level	Those who 'call the shots'	Those who need to be pleased	Potential collaborators	People who value potential
View of customers	*Revenue channels*	*A constituency to cater to*	*A constituency to make proud of being linked to the organization*	*A constituency to impassion about the organization*
Level of organizational learning	Incipient	Low	Moderate	High

* See Measuring Hidden Dimensions, Volume 1 (2006).

Table 9.2 Change of Organizational Perspective of Employees

Intermediate Summary

The concept of the *Three Houses* has important entailments both theoretically and practically:

- While the Quadrants of Dialectic comprise the *total* epistemic object, Wilber's four quadrants only comprise the epistemic object of the social world. The former are therefore intrinsic to, and presupposed by, the latter (Bhaskar, 1993, 272).
- While the Quadrants of Dialectic define the structure of consciousness, Wilber's four quadrants (here mapped into the three Houses) define the multidimensionality of the social world.
- For employees, management, and customers alike, work is a complex interweaving of *left quadrant* intangible processes of individual sense and meaning making with *right quadrant* quantifiable processes of performance and business operations.
- The left quadrants constitute the developmental root from which organizational work develops. Disregarding them in human resources management eliminates the very basis of *intangible assets*.
- Methods of measuring the left, intangible quadrants are *developmental*; they are commensurable with behavioral methods when integrated into a comprehensive capability management strategy (see Chapter 15).

DISCUSSION OF EACH HOUSE INDIVIDUALLY

It would be no more than a formalistic exercise to speak of the dialectic of each of the Three Houses. The dialectical can be determined only by cognitive interview. It is specific to an individual or group of individuals. It is by way of a *meta-analysis* of a group of individuals' Houses that one can arrive at a bird's-eye view of the experiential dialectics defining a particular organizational environment.

In what follows, I discuss each of the Three Houses individually, beginning with the Self House in which, since it represents the upper left quadrant, all Houses are anchored. I emphasize the influence of *phase of dialectical development* on how these Houses are constructed in the minds of organization members. My outline is meant to give managers, consultants, and coaches *hooks* by which to intervene with their clients with an awareness of adult development. In subsequent chapters, I will show how information elicited in the Houses, e.g., from employees, is evaluated for the sake of determining an individual's cognitive profile, and is given feedback on.

The Self House

The Self House comprises all moves-in-thought having to do with an individual's *Professional Agenda.* The agenda is more than a list of goals to accomplish. It is also a set of assumptions an individual is making about the relationship between self and role, and the personal values and self-developmental mandate to follow regarding work in the role.

Given that an individual's Self House is extraordinarily complex it is helpful to distinguish three different but related dimensions:

- Cognitive (including epistemic)
- Social-emotional
- Axiological (value systems)

All of these dimensions are beyond observation but yield to developmental assessment scrutiny. The Self House is the hardest of the three mental spaces of work to fathom, and the easiest to misconstrue.

The Difference between Self and Role

In all types of work, whether organizational or not, an experiential difference exists between Self and Role, in the sense of Figure 9.1. As Haber (1996, 20-21) says:

> The self lives within the confines of the professional role. Our uniqueness—personal history, personal style, strengths and weaknesses, gender and cultural perspective, emotional responses, physical and characterological capabilities and limitations—comprises our singular version of humanness.

Optimally, self and role coexist in an acknowledged, functional, creative, and respectful union (Haber, 1996, 21). However, such a union is not a given, but an achievement of adult development over the lifespan. Consequently, a behavioral (or clinical) notion of self needs to be amplified by a developmental one as discussed in this book.

In detail, the Self House can be understood as composed of four dimensions:

1. the *evolving self* level of social-emotional and cognitive development which determines how the individual makes meaning and sense of her life and work;
2. the *work context* level that decides how the individual constructs her workplace emotionally and cognitively;
3. the *Professional Agenda* level which comprises the individual's assumptions about how the work to be done is relevant to the professional self; and
4. the *axiological* level that comprises the values the individual follows that may be more or less attuned to organizational values.

Understandably, the way an individual's self relates to his or her role differs depending on level of adult development. Developmental level sets limits to how well a role can be "played." Experiencing work in an organizational role is determined by shifts in orientation following the development of the self, both in the social-emotional and cognitive sense. This fact is made more explicit in the table below in which cognitive *Frame of Reference* and social-emotional *Orientation* are shown in separate parts of the table.

Just as the social world at large, the evolving self, represented on the bottom floor of the Self House, is stratified in the sense of TF #11. The stratification is that of human consciousness. It manifests cognitively and social-emotionally in different but related ways that are neither aligned in a one-to-one fashion nor in terms of linear causality (TF #7). The remaining three floors of the Self House – *Work Context, Professional Agenda,* and *Personal Culture* – subsume a host of adult-developmental factors that determine how an employee, manager or customer will function on each floor of the Houses. Depending on dialectical thought form fluidity, the floors will be more or less linked and integrated, and knowledge transfer from one House to the other will be more or less systemic.

Cognitive Frame of Reference	Second Order of Complexity		Third Order of Complexity	
	Phase 1 of Dialectical Thinking	**Phase 2 of Dialectical Thinking**	**Phase 3 of Dialectical Thinking**	**Phase 4 of Dialectical Thinking**
View of organizations	Institutions to 'walk into'	Assemblages of people & materials	Interpersonal networks	Self-transforming organisms
View of management level	Those who 'call the shots'	Those who need to be pleased	Potential collaborators	People who value potential
Level of organization-al learning	Incipient	Low	Moderate	High
Social-Emotional Orientation	**Stage 2 Instrumentalist**	**Stage 3 Other-dependent**	**Stage 4 Self-authored**	**Stage 5 Self-aware**
View of Others	Instruments of own need gratification	Needed to contribute to own self image	Collaborator, delegate, peer	Contributors to own integrity and balance
Level of Self Insight	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
Values	Law of Jungle	Community	Self-determined	Humanity
Needs	Overriding all others' needs	Subordinate to community, work group	Flowing from striving for integrity	Viewed in connection with own obligations and limitations
Need to Control	Very High	Moderate	Low	Very low
Communication	Unilateral	Exchange 1:1	Dialogue	True Communication
Organizational Orientation	Careerist	Good Citizen	Manager	System's Leader

Table 9.3 Change of Orientations in Adults' Self House
due to differences in level of social-emotional and cognitive development

Phase 1 of dialectical thinking is considered broadly commensurate with Stage 2 of social-emotional development. Employees at this level follow an *instrumentalist* philosophy centered on gratifying their own needs first, with little ability for true dialogue and only the faintest grasp of systemic thinking. Their level of organizational learning is very low. They hold views of customers as interchangeable "objects with attributes" rather than systems in their own right.

Phase 2 employees are *other-dependent* (Stage 3). They derive their self-worth from following others' expectations with a beginning ability to separate out their own authentic self from that of internalized others (such as *my boss*). Their cognitive grasp on reality is more highly accommodating than assimilatory so that dialectical thought forms lack real depth for them, especially in the Relationship and Systems categories. As a result, their degree of organizational learning is relatively low. They begin to offer customers an internal hearing, but only to the extent that serving customers "pays off for the team," which will not suffice for delivering sustained customer service due to lack of principle.

Truly professional work only begins in Phase 3 of dialectical thinking and is based on Stage-4 self-authoring ability (Kegan, 1994). Here, the level of self-insight is high and professional values are self-determined. Need for control is low and dialogue with customers and managers is becoming a possibility. Customers are viewed as peers, not as subjects under one's control or individuals to cater to. They are regarded as highly as one's own self, demanding one's professional integrity to come into play – not just loyalty to the company one works for.

For most employees, Phase 4 of dialectical thinking, linked as it is to a Stage 5 self-aware position, will be out of reach for most since less than 10% of employees ever reach Stage 5 and commensurate dialectical thinking. The same holds for managers. At this juncture, level of organizational learning is high simply because self-insight is very high and need for control very low. For managers, this phase is the crucial one in terms of leadership of self and others. Self-awareness is at its peak and others, including employees and customers, are viewed in terms of their potential rather than merely their performance. Dialectical thinking makes the individual appreciate *what is not there but could be there*, and speeds up the discovery of potential awaiting realization. Sadly, human resource managers rarely enter even into Phase 3 of dialectical thinking.

Work Context

Work Context articulates how an employee or manager views his or her relationship to the organization in practical, action-oriented terms. Self House stratification has immediate consequences for the way in which individuals construe their *Work Context*.

Topical on this floor are the rules and conventions employees and managers employ to construct their Professional Agenda, as well as the organizational support systems in place that either sustain or fail them. Of course, work context is determined by individuals' understanding of their own accountability and the level of work complexity they have to manage. The floor also comprises the images of *sponsor, boss,* and *colleagues* an individual follows, that is, the individual's understanding of the social network that supports his or her work.

Professional Agenda

An individual's Professional Agenda is a set of *theories in use* (Argyris et al., 1987), that is, a set of assumptions professionals make about their work, including motivations for doing the work. Such theories are often espoused, with a concomitant gap between what is said and done. Theories-in-use are different from *applied theories,* which describe what the individual *actually does*. They summarize how the individual thinks and speaks about the organization in contrast to the individual's actions. The greater the gap between the two, the more the individual lacks authenticity and attunement to the professional standards and brand promise of the organization.

Here, we encounter issues having to do with how an employee or manager construes his or her mission and job description, and how, consequently, s(he) sets goals, approaches assignments, and pursues tasks. The relationship between this floor and the Task and Organizational Houses is entirely determinative in the sense that whatever does not exist on this floor will not materialize in an individual's performance. This is because a person's workplace is an internally constructed one where sense is made of the work, while the outer workplace is only the physical and social scenario through which the person's internal sense making manifests in concrete, observable terms.

Clearly, both phase of cognitive development and social-emotional stage have a direct and lasting influence on the Professional Agenda, aside from an individual's *psychological* balance (e.g., absence of

clinical symptoms), work habits, ability of risk taking, and ease of affiliation with others all of which form part of the individual's applied capability. An individual's cognitive profile (current potential capability) determines to what extent the Professional Agenda includes attention to realizing one's own potential (emergent potential capability).

Personal Culture

Personal culture differs from organizational culture as much as self differs from role. Personal culture is unique to the individual's capability and determines the unique ways in which s(he) pursues tasks and generates outcomes. *Best practices* implicitly aim at eliminating differences between people by making them interchangeably script-based, and thus by definition are inimical to Personal Culture.

On this floor of the Self House, the cognitive fingerprint and social-emotional balance of the individual have great salience. Where organizational culture opposes or differs from personal culture, measurable energy sinks and frustration occurs (Aderman, 1969; Laske, 2008; Murray, 1938). As a consequence, a person's potential capability cannot manifest. Depending on the individual's developmental profile, such culture clashes easily extinguish whatever capability there is in the individual. While this is not felt very strongly on social-emotional level 3 where co-dependence is the rule, on the self-authoring level (S-4), where it is associated with a better systemic grasp of organizational mission and cultural climate, clashes between personal and organizational culture can be severe and costly to both the individual and the organization.

As an example of a clash of personal and organizational values, consider the following excerpt from the cognitive interview discussed in depth in Chapter 11. In the context of using TF #25 (evaluative comparison of systems in transformation), in order to systematically compare his own system of values to that of the company he is working for, the speaker says:

> One of the things that I felt that frustrated me and caused me to throw my hands up and say "What am I doing here?" had to do with the ability to solve problems, or the inability to solve problems. I felt like, after a certain point, the real point of the work was not to solve the problem—or not to solve the real problem, the actual problem that was causing all these other problems such as not paying…. [I had] a feeling that you were only working on the surface and that you weren't working on the actual cause. That definitely turned me away from the work, because I felt it was ineffectual, it was just wasteful…. I've come to the experience and realization that I want to feel that I'm actually working toward, working on causes instead of only on effects. …
>
> Basically, I'm looking for the cause of justice and how to do that…. It's also at least an entryway into looking at it from a more whole approach. We're dealing most of the time, at least in the world of business, with externals. Like I was saying, I'm looking for what causes justice. Obviously the external components are happening there, but the internal components are something I want to look into now.

Of course, only an individual close to self-authoring stage (here S-4(3)) with a Fluidity Index and Systems Thinking Index of 24 (%) (see Chapter 11) would have the capability to distinguish *business as usual* from the underlying ethical issues his company, a financial services firm, has no real interest in looking at. From the speaker's perspective, his own Professional Agenda has outgrown the company's mandate, and he is consequently going to leave the company behind as not contributing to his further development. His construction of the internal workplace has surpassed the resources offered him by the company.

The Task House

In contrast to the Self House, the Task House addresses the *Role* of an individual in MAH, and how cognitive sense is made of it. Moves-in-thought in the Task House therefore reveal how the individual construes level of accountability (Stratum), work complexity, and the tasks that flow from the Role, as well as how her different roles interrelate. Capturing these moves via interview and the associated Fluidity Index will make it clear how systemic is an individual's grasp of his or her task performance.

Since, as Haber (1996, 21) says, the Role receives more public credence than the Self, the fact that it is the Self that determines the individual's *interpretation of the Role* poses a central issue for capability management. Whatever attention is heaped on the Role will not sway the Self to let go of its needs and abandon its true capabilities. To the extent that these needs and capabilities are not recognized, they will resist and thus stand in the way of fulfilling role requirements.

The reader has been aware since Chapter 3 that roles are defined in terms of organizational strata. This verity has a decisive influence on the four aspects of role performance as distinguished, for instance, by Mintzberg (1989, 15-16):

1. formal authority and status
2. interpersonal roles
3. informational roles
4. decisional roles

Strata	***Conventional Job Descriptions***	**Fluidity Index Required**	**Social-Emotional Stage Required**
VIII	Board Member	> 50	5
VII	CEO		5/4 – 5(4)
VI	Executive VP	> 30 < 50	4(5) – 4/5
V	President		4
IV	General Manager	> 10 < 30	4/3 – 4(3)
III	Unit Manager		3(4) – 3/4
II	Line Manager	< 10	3
I	Shop and Office		2/3 – 3(2)

Table 9.4 Developmental Profile of Jaques' Strata

At each Stratum, a different level of work complexity obtains and, consequently, a different level of responsibility exists. For this reason, in terms of Requisite Organization, only such individuals who have a commensurate cognitive and social-emotional profile should do work assigned into the role, *regardless of what a particular company's job description for the Stratum may be*. Evidently, both cognitive and social-emotional profile and their inherent dialectic have a determining influence on how a particular role is "played" by an individual.

Distinguishing with Mintzberg (1989) three essentially different roles, shown below, it stands to reason that social-emotional stage reached by an individual will be crucial for work in interpersonal roles, while in decisional roles cognitive profile may count more than meaning-making capacity.

Only in informational roles – which have a surface neutrality – can an individual manage to function at a lower social-emotional level, at least if sustained by a well-developed cognitive profile and supportive culture. Since, however, in most cases the three types of role are inseparably linked, developmental profile will be a determining factor throughout role performance.

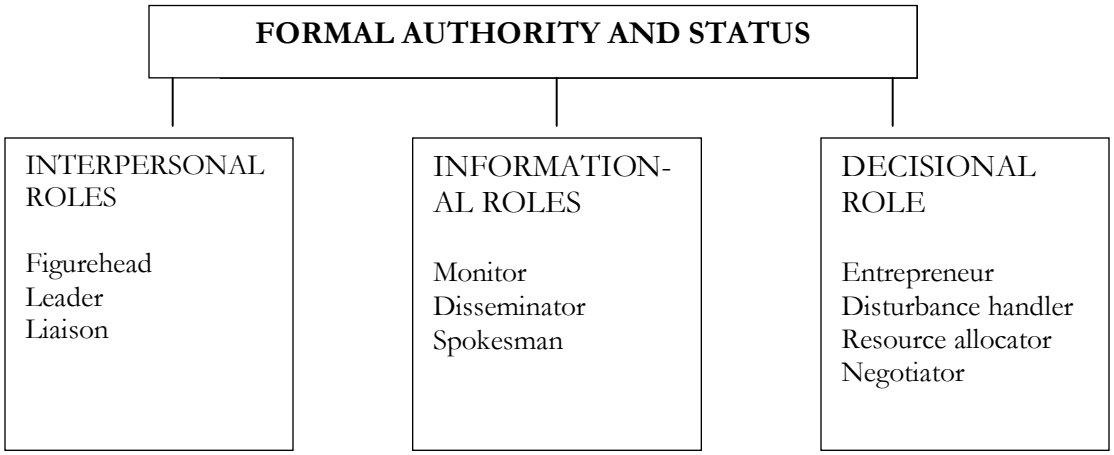

Fig. 9.6 Three Kinds of Roles as Foundations of the Task House

Let us take as example the informational role. As Mintzberg sees it (1989, 18-19):

As *monitor*, the manager … scans his or her environment for information, interrogates liaison contacts and subordinates, and receives unsolicited information, much of it as result of the network of personal contacts s(he) has developed. …Managers must share and distribute much of this information. In their *disseminator* role, managers pass some of their privileged information directly to their subordinates, who otherwise would have no access to it. … In their *spokesman* role, managers send some of their information to people outside their units … every manager must inform and satisfy influential people who control his or her organizational unit.

As implied by this description, even in informational roles social-emotional maturity carries a heavy weight. How a manager decides to share information is a function of what s(he) feels she "should do" and for whom, and this is a function of his or her social-emotional maturity.

As a decision maker, an individual lives in the center of a complex web of interpersonal contacts and takes in, as well as disseminates, vital information. S(he) is the nerve center who commits to new courses of action, whether as an *entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, or negotiator*. Functioning on this floor requires high cognitive flexibility. Although the contemporary business and consulting literature one-sidedly privilege "leaders" (without ever quite agreeing what makes them that), requirements are taxing for all three types of role considered above, and at all levels of the organization.

In light of the foregoing, it is not only the integration of Self and Role that matters in the Task House, but the *integration of different roles*. The accomplished performer is minimally efficient in the three roles named, performing optimally in one of them. But how does a performer juggle the 10 roles outlined above in terms of moves-in-thought? Is s(he) social-emotionally over-invested in the interpersonal role to the detriment of the decisional role? Does s(he) perform the decisional role

without sufficient input from the informational role because she makes sense of the organization in Phase 2 rather than 3? In short, what is the level of reflective judgment and discretion that defines her work as *work* (rather than as following commands or "best practices")? As shown in Chapter 11, a professional cognitive interview will deliver cogent answers to these questions.

As Kegan (1994) suggests from a social-emotional vantage point, professionals are easily *in over their head* if they haven't reached the self-authoring stage (S-4). From what we have seen in this book, we know that there are purely epistemic and cognitive reasons as well for being in over one's head. To what extent this occurs will depend on whether or not a person has reached the *Third Order of Mental Complexity,* or Phase 3 of dialectical thinking, that is closely associated with S-4. Wherever these two aspects are not properly distinguished, and the move of cognitive development into dialectical thinking is disregarded, process consultants are bereft of effective tools for dialectically based interventions.

The Organizational House

As Gioia and Sims (1986, 384) say: "Organizational reality is a socially constructed one, forged out of a consensus of vision and action that exists largely or completely in the minds of the organization's members." The cultural aspect of organizations (LL) influences even the "hard," "objective" structures (LR) in terms of which organizations monitor themselves. How exactly this happens much depends both on the developmental level management operates on, and the aggregated level of employees' adult development in a particular work-unit. The Organizational House is also known as the Environmental House.

Following Bolman and Deal (1991), below I introduce four different perspectives individuals may take on the social environment in the Organizational House. These authors suggest that on principle no event, situation, or occurrence can be understood unless one can *reframe* one's view of the organization in terms of the four complementary mental frames named below:

- the *structural* frame of division of labor and hierarchy of command;
- the *political* frame of groups competing for power and resources;
- the *human-systems* frame of how human needs are fulfilled in the organization; and
- the *symbolic* frame of what holds an organization together as a culture, and dynamically as a ritual and play.

There is no way to hold even two of these perspectives without dialectical thinking. (Abductive "integrative" thinking in the sense of R. Martin (2007a/b) has nothing to do with it.) As shown below, depending on the present culture of an organization, each of the frames has different salience. Salience itself is determined by values and interpretations, thus frequently intangible aspects of organizational culture.

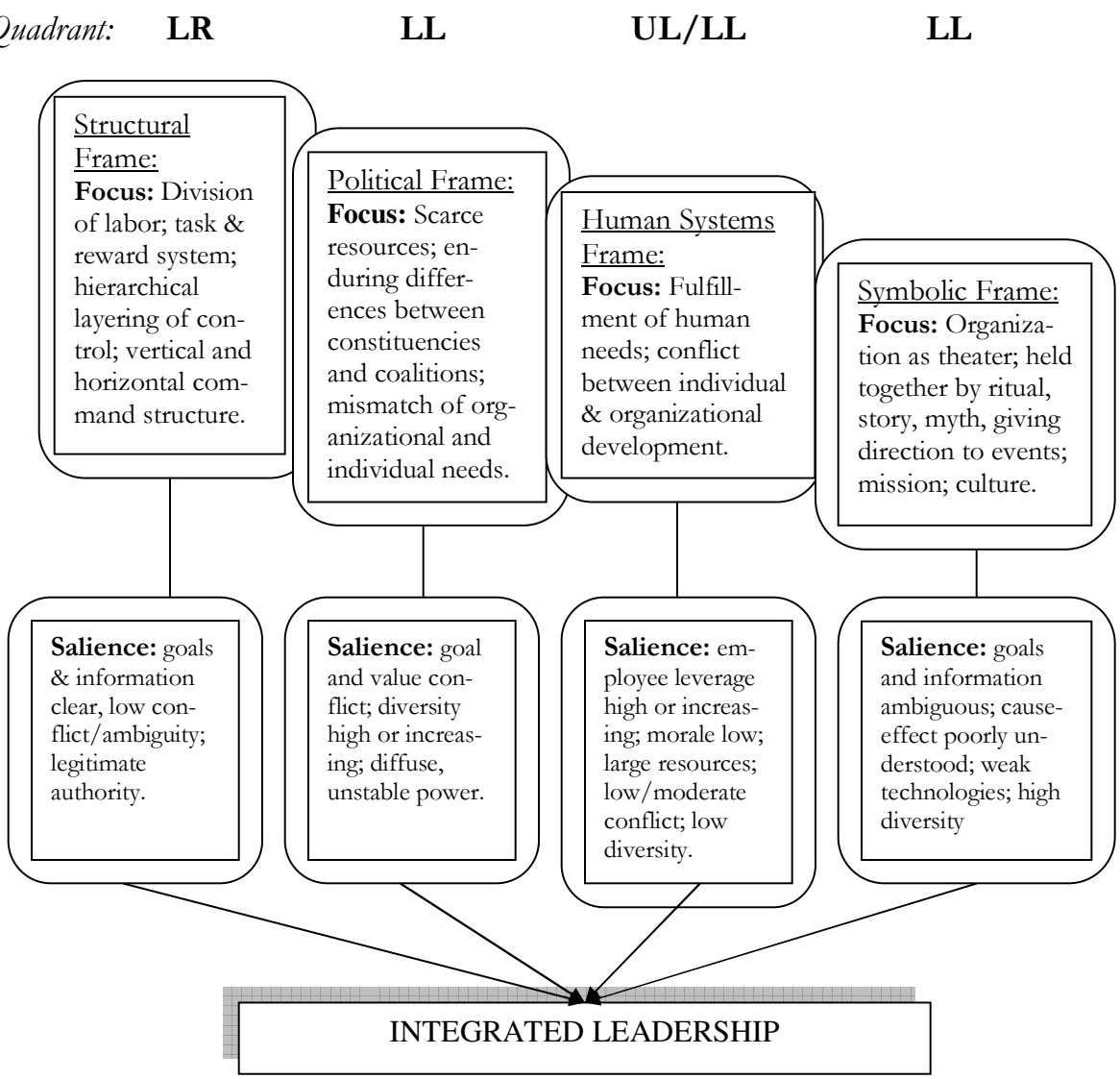

Fig. 9.7 The Four Mental Frames Constituting the Organizational House
(Laske in Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007, 231)

When we view integrative leadership from a purely cognitive point of view, the frames appear as perspectives, each of which has stark limitations. Wilber's UR quadrant shows up only implicitly, as a "matter of debate" or target of the *Illumination Transform*. The more we move away from a strictly structural perspective, we also move away from the objectified collective (LR), into dimensions of the Human Capability Hierarchy (HCH), that is, into the left quadrants. The HCH finds its most exalted expression in the *Symbolic Frame,* in which the Quadrants of Dialectic assume a playful form. Here, transformational change is reflected in subtle messages both informational and personal, best studied in the way anthropologists study a previously unknown South Sea archipelago. The dialectically thinking process consultant has the mandate to explore how the organizational culture is reflected in managers' and subordinates' use of dialectical thought forms, and to understand one-sided or terribly simplified mental framing in a company as an obstacle to its performance and

survival. (The September 2008 global financial crisis is a good example of what happens when formalistic thinking gains the upper hand over systemic transformational thinking.)

The four mental frames composing the Organizational House are discussed one by one below.

The Four Organizational Perspectives in Detail

The *structural perspective* (rooted in the lower right quadrant, LR) is the easiest to grasp and hold, grounded as it is in an organization's division of labor and reward system. It is also easiest to proclaim in purely formal logical terms. The perspective concerns the hierarchical layering of control and command structure in the sense of TF #11 (hierarchical nature of the layers that systems comprise). It is *salient* for organization members only when goals and information are clear, and if there is low conflict or ambiguity and legitimate authority in the organization (Bolman and Deal, 1991, 43 f.). Clearly, this state of affairs is best guaranteed by establishing *requisite organization* in a company. To the extent that the two organizational architectures of work complexity (right quadrants) and individual capability (left quadrants) are out of synch, the structural perspective loses salience. Equally, if the company has too many or too few layers of command, or distorts developmental stratification by way of political assignments contradicting level of capability, the structural perspective is impaired and cannot consistently be maintained by members of the organization.

The *political frame* (rooted in the lower left quadrant; LL) focuses on scarce resources, enduring differences between constituents and coalitions, and the mismatch of organizational and individual needs (Bolman and Deal, 1991, 183 f.). It acquires greatest salience when goal and value conflict exists between individual and organization and groups within the organization, when diversity is high and/or increasing, and when diffuse, unstable power pervades the organization. In this case, constituents will adopt contrasting views and policies, and use their cognitive potential to *politicize,* rather than harmonize, conflicts within the organization. To hinder this from happening or minimize its occurrence, leaders capable of systemic thinking are needed who can transcend the political frame and look at what happens in the organization from multiple perspectives.

The *human system* frame (rooted in the upper quadrants, UL and UR) focuses on fulfillment of human needs and conflict between individual and organizational development (Bolman and Deal, 1991, 119 f.). This frame is most salient in organizations when employee leverage is high or increasing – as in times of talent shortage, morale is low, and sufficient financial resources exist to close gaps between individual and organizational needs. However, as Fleming et al.'s investigation of employee-customer relationships demonstrates (see Chapter 14), this perspective may be a crucial factor in reaching higher performance bands. The lower employee and customer diversity, the more easily this frame can serve as a guideline for action planning. It is most crucial where customer and employee diversity is high.

The *symbolic frame* (rooted in the lower left quadrant, LL), focuses on organizations as theater, held together by ritual, story, and myth giving direction to events. It defines mission and culture of an organization. This frame has greatest salience when information and goals inside a company are ambiguous, cause-effect links are poorly understood or inapplicable, and high diversity exists (Bolman and Deal, 1991, 243 f.).

It makes good sense to ask: What are the cognitive requirements for thinking in each of these frames? Pulling these frames together is a systemic task of tall order, and a principal requirement of leadership.

Mental Frame	Thought Form Grounding	Proportional Use of Thought Form Classes*
Structural	TFs #8-9, 10-12; 19; 22	C [5], R [1], T [1]
Political	TFs #3; 14; 23-24	P [1], R [1], T [2]
Human System	TFs #4-5; 8-9, 11; 15-18, 19-20; 24, 27-28	P [2], C[3], R [6], T [3]
Symbolic	TFs #22, 24, 26-27, 28	T [5]

* P = Process, C = Context, R = Relationship, T = Transformational System.

Table 9.5. Thought Form (Classes) elucidating the Organizational House

Interestingly, the Human System perspective engages the widest scope of dialectical thought forms and is therefore the most difficult to hold consistently. This indicates that being, or becoming, aware of its salience requires functioning in the Third Order of Complexity, initially Phase 3 of dialectical thinking, if not Phase 4. This requirement certainly explains why Human Resources Directors find it hard to embrace this perspective, as well as the ease felt at lower developmental levels in adopting policies such as *SixSigma* or feedback systems such as the *Balanced Scorecard*, both of which remain within the Second Order of Mental Complexity and thus largely fail at systemic dialectical thinking.

The lack of the Human Resources perspective in organizations is borne out by the research done by Fleming and Asplund (2007). The research demonstrates the paucity of companies demonstrating insight that employee and customer relations are mutually supportive systems that cannot truly be separated. The authors' suggestion that all human systems of a company ought to be overseen by a *Chief HumanSigma Officer* is of particular interest (see Chapter 14). Alas, their research completely neglects the developmental profile such an executive would have to possess to be properly prepared for his or her task (Fleming and Asplund, 2007, 231 f.).

Creating an Integrated Change Policy and Plan in the Organizational House

The way the Organizational House is internally constructed by management finds a direct expression in a company's *Change Policy*. As shown by the parameters in Figure 9.8, below, creating such a policy and attendant plan requires a synthesis of salient frames. Formulating and implementing such a plan is a systemic thinking task of high order (Laske in Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007, 231; Bolman & Deal, 1991, 320 f.).

Considering that the use of the four frames is determined by how organization members construct their inner workplace, it comes as no surprise to learn how difficult it is to change the structure of individuals' and teams' Organizational House. Attention to the MAH alone, as proposed by *social design* (Gray et al., 2008) can be supportive only in an ancillary fashion. The change would, first of all, have to occur in members' Self House, in which individuals engage in transformational, not just transactional, activities.

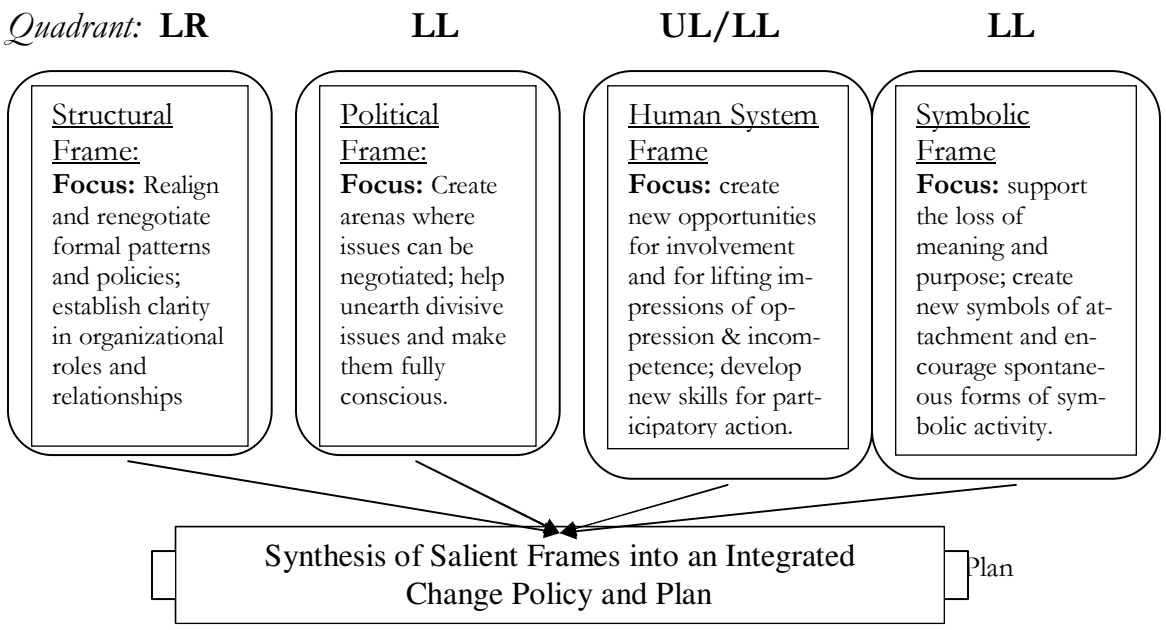

Fig. 9.8 Ingredients of an Integrated Change Policy and Plan

The appropriate concept describing this venture is *re-education*, first formulated by Kurt Lewin, and summarized below by Benne (1976, 274):

> Lewin's analysis assumed that effective re-education must affect the person being re-educated in three ways. The person's cognitive structure must be altered. And for Lewin, this structure included modes of perception, his ways of seeing his physical and social worlds, as well as the facts, concepts, expectations and beliefs with which the person thinks about the possibilities of action in the phenomenal world. But re-education must involve modifying his valences and values as well as his cognitive structures. Valences and values include not only his principles of what he should or should not do or consider doing – which along with his cognitive views of himself and his world are presented by his beliefs. They include also his attractions and aversions to his and other groups and their standards, his feelings in regard to status differences and authority, and his reactions to various sources of approval and disapproval. Re-education finally must affect a person's motoric actions, his repertoire of behavioral skills, and the degree of a person's conscious control of his body and social movements.

Thirty years after this was written, the comprehensive wish list it represents can be deciphered as convergent with the trajectory of adult development over the lifespan. The transformational activity called *education* is best modeled after the mental growth adults *by nature* experience, and is not something "to do" other than to support.

Slogans like "adult learning" remain just talk and hand-waving as long as developmental insight is not brought to bear on the educational task, foremost on educators themselves. Teaching dialectical thinking is a major tool in this endeavor. The transformations aimed for comprise not only social-emotional and cognitive but also axiological (value) and bodily changes. The latter are grounded in the social-emotional domain where sense is made of "body versus mind" (TF #25 [evaluation of systems in transformation]).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have explored three differently structured mental spaces called *Houses*, a compact rendition of Wilber's four quadrants interpreted in organizational terms. I have outlined the conceptual framework for conducting cognitive interviews as part of the CDF methodology (see Chapter 11). The chapter suggests that individuals construct their *internal workplace* in three different but related mental spaces, and that how they do so can be understood based on interview and scored in terms of dialectical thought forms (Fluidity Index).

When we consider that the dialectic of the Houses, just as that of Wilber's quadrants, is based on the Quadrants of Dialectic, it becomes clear that an uneven distribution of thought forms over the Three Houses not only points to an imbalance in an individual's cognitive profile but also in his or her construction of the internal workplace. In cognitive interview evaluation, this is shown by the *Systems Thinking Index* (see Chapter 11).

Topically, I have reinforced Bolman and Deal's (1991) view that organizations are constructed internally, and that therefore transformational activities in the Organizational House will fail unless undertaken from a structural, political, human-system, and symbolic perspective *simultaneously*. This settles organizations with the requirement of dialectical thinking as part of leaders' self-development. (Present leadership development and change programs have so far not discovered and do not seem to exercise dialectical thinking.)

In more specific terms, I have proposed that the way individuals construct work and their internal workplace is a function of their adult-developmental profile, both cognitive and social-emotional. Their views of *management*, *customers*, and the degree to which they are capable of *organizational learning* are all rooted in their current and emergent potential capability, not primarily their skills, attitudes, experience, etc. As shown in Chapter 15, *Capability Management* is a way of understanding how employees and managers intervene in their own and others' Houses, and this is primarily determined by how they operate in their own Self House (see Chapter 15).

With regard to management philosophies I have noted that these differ in terms of which of Wilber's quadrants, and thus Houses, they include in their belief systems. Those that restrict themselves to the right quadrants will necessarily aim at doing away with human uniqueness as much as possible, while those that manage to be "all-quadrant/all-level" in their thinking have a deep enough notion of talent and potential to resist *Terminator* philosophies such as SixSigma (Fleming and Asplund, 2007). Those leaders who can overcome their behaviorist stance (critiqued by TF #17 [reductionism]) by inclusion of adult-developmental insight have a chance of thinking dialectically in the sense of CDF. They will most likely be individuals who have advanced to the Fourth Order of Mental Complexity (Fluidity Index > 50).

It is interesting to consider that while organizations are based on *both* the lower left and right quadrants (LL, LR), organization members construct the organization in terms of *all four* Wilber quadrants or Three Houses. How they construct the Self House as part of their internal workplace has a major impact on their moves-in-thought in both Task House and Organizational House. Since the Quadrants of Dialectic inhere all three Houses (and all Wilber Quadrants), organizational dynamics are very complex. This complexity is mainly managed by way of the *symbolic frame* in the sense of Bolman and Deal (1991). The salience of this frame is heightened by thinking in the *Fourth Order of Mental Complexity,* which theories of organization and leadership have so far not shown themselves to be able to accomplish.

NEWLY INTRODUCED CONCEPTS

1. Integrated Leadership
2. Mental frames (for understanding an organization)
3. Mental space of work
4. Organizational House
5. Professional agenda
6. Role vs. Self
7. Salience of a mental frame
8. Self House
9. Task House

PRACTICE REFLECTIONS

- When talking to managers, which of the four Quadrants of Dialectic do you find are typically in the foreground of their thinking?
- When talking to employees, which of the four Quadrants of Dialectic are typically in the foreground of their thinking?
- In your work, what demonstrates the dialectic of the Upper Left (UL) and the Upper Right quadrant (UR)?
- In your work, how does the influence of the Lower Left quadrant (LL) make itself felt, and how is that influence reflected in empirical data regarding the Organizational House (researched, e.g., by the *Need/Press Questionnaire* of CDF)?
- What are occasions in your work life when you typically shift attention to the Self House, away from the Task House?
- During a typical work day, on which of the four floors of the Organizational House are you most engaged?
- Are there floors or rooms in the Self House that you tend to avoid entering?
- What floor of the Organizational House is your company's change policy predominantly focused on, and what floor is considered taboo?
- If you could convince your boss of taking a different point of view of employees like you, what floor of what House would you invite him to enter?
- In leading a management retreat, in terms of which of the Three Houses would you introduce the notion of the *Human Capability Hierarchy* (HCH) as a hidden dimension of the organization?

EXERCISES

1. What is the task of management in light of the fact that organizations comprise both lower quadrants in the sense of Wilber (LL, LR)?
2. What is the task of managing employee-customer relationships considering that employees' work is decidedly grounded in the Self House (UL)?
3. What would it entail to manage customer relationships from the point of view of all four floors of the Organizational House?
4. Explain the difference between HCH and MAH to a Stratum III (Phase 2) manager in the Second Order of Mental Complexity who cannot think dialectically.
5. Describe the Self House of an employee who is part of the sales force in contrast to that of a customer. How do their Professional Agendas differ?
6. Describe your own Task House at work in terms of the four floors it comprises. Consider it as influenced by the other two Houses in terms of which you construct your internal workplace.
7. How would you go about discerning from what floor of the Organizational House a customer views your company?
8. What is the predominant role in which an employee working directly with customers finds him- or herself? If you answered *interpersonal*, what does it entail for the employee to function as a liaison in terms of the four mental frames of the Organizational House?
9. What thought forms would be *minimally* required to make a sale based on understanding a customer's needs and desires?
10. What might it entail to use TF #16 (value of bringing into relationship) in customer relationships (beyond the obvious content this implies)?