Paper title
Leading organisational culture change: An examination of how the board and senior managers have exercised leadership in a non-governmental organisation (Barnardos) from 2003 through 2011

Author
Michael Webster
School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
m.webster@auckland.ac.nz

Abstract
Research into and conceptualisation of leadership and management in New Zealand social service organisations from the unique Treaty perspective in service delivery is currently limited. I argue that integrating management and social work as two semi-professions (Etzioni, 1969) from the perspective of the Treaty creates a unique construct of leadership and management exercised in social services.

The project draws from diverse elements including ‘new public management;’ social anthropological notions of culture; organisation and management understandings of cultural change management; systems approaches to professional leadership actions; organisations as living organisms; change as unpredictable. The research aims to develop a model of leading cultural change for social service organisations in New Zealand using a case study on Barnardos. Transformational change in a ‘turbulent environment’ (Dooley, 1997) is a prime reality for practitioners functioning in formal or peer-recognised leadership positions.

The project’s distinctive approach derives from its examination of leadership actions and management of culture change–common enough–but within a New Zealand-specific social work conceptualisation of leadership and management never before attempted. The knowledge gap it thus seeks to fill is professionally validated by the International Federation of Social Work’s (IFSW) recognition in 2004 that management is a ‘core purpose’ of social work.

By identifying and analysing leadership processes initiated in Barnardos, research findings potentially offer social service professionals a ‘road map’ of how one entity carried out a change programme.

Key words
Leadership; culture change
Introduction: Conceptual influences on social service leadership

In 2004, the International Federation of Social Workers (‘IFSW’) recognised management as a ‘core purpose’ of social work, thus providing professional validation for research on organisational studies from a social work perspective (Sewpaul and Jones, 2005). Historically, social work practitioners have exhibited ambivalent attitudes towards ‘management.’ Classical management theorists (eg. Fayol, 1947) identified ‘control’ as an indispensable element of the managerial function; social workers saw this characteristic as inimical to the empowering philosophy of their profession. The neutral ‘administration’ rather than ‘management’ was the preferred descriptor. The IFSW management recognition arguably represented a seminal reappraisal of the radical perception of ‘the social professions as agents of a repressive state’ (Banks, 2004, pp.35-37).

Two broad conceptual streams in the 1980s introduced transformational change into New Zealand social services. The first stream was neo-liberal economic and management thinking introduced by the fourth Labour government. ‘New public management’ (NPM) (Boston, Martin, Pallot and Walsh, 1996; Scott, 2001) applied private sector management approaches to the public sector. Through principal-agency theory (Lane, 2005) government mandated contractual obligations vis-à-vis non-governmental organisations (NGOs) extended NPM influence in ‘turbulent environments where change is imminent and frequent’ (Dooley, 1997, p.92). Coincident to the application of NPM thinking to social services, public sector policy and professional commitment to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi introduced a further cultural shift to social service leadership and management. Prime drivers of this paradigm change were the examination of racism in the Department of Social Welfare published as Puao-Te-Ata-Tu (Rangihau, 1988), and the findings of the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988). The Royal Commission recognized the Treaty as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand, citing Mr Justice Richardson’s statement (New Zealand Administrative Report, 1987) that ‘…the Treaty is a positive force in the life of the nation and so in the government of the country.’ In 1993 the influence of Puao-Te-Ata-Tu and the Royal Commission was seen in the adoption of a bicultural code of social work ethics which called for ‘an active commitment to an indigenous identity for social work in Aotearoa New Zealand [and] recognises existing Māori models and initiatives as alternatives to conventional monocultural institutions’ (Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers, 1993, p.16).

This paper suggests that the convergence of these disparate streams created an unprecedented maelstrom as practitioners, managers and leaders came to terms with their change agent roles in social service organisations. Faced with senior management expectations predicated on NPM thinking, middle and frontline managers grappled with the challenges of implementing new policy and practice while simultaneously addressing expected culture change ‘buy-in’ by their service delivery teams.
Conventional ‘top-down’ change management models – eg Kotter’s (1995) change process – failed to adequately provide a ‘road map’ for social service organisational practitioners. The author argues that this failure demonstrated the need to integrate organic Māori approaches to organisation thinking (Te Whaiti Nui-a-Toi, 2001) which carries conceptual similarities to ‘emergent complexity’ thinking appearing in the management literature (eg Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009; Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007) and applied to social services (Webster, 2010). Complexity approaches to organisation and management practice constitute a third stream to the project.

**Construction of this paper**

The conceptual influences canvassed in the introduction are integrated into figure 1 which comprises the framework for the project. An overview of these influences will provide a platform to understand the project.

The paper will:

- Describe and integrate the elements of figure 1 and propose a leadership model for social services
Synthesising tensions: a leadership model for social services

In recent years, case study examinations of organisational leadership have shifted from trait approaches analysing the qualities and attributes of leaders to an emergent process-orientation of leader-follower relationships. Taylorist scientific management, re-emergent in the New Zealand public sector since the 1980s as ‘new public management’ (NPM) (Pollitt, 1990), and ‘top-down’ directions from leaders have been critically re-evaluated by complexity theorists proposing a perspective of leadership actions from an organic view of organisations. This shift focuses attention on the leader-follower dynamic, and also argues that leadership actions may be initiated from individuals at diverse levels in the organisation, characterised as ‘complex adaptive systems’ (McMillan, 2008; Plowman, Solansky, Beck, Baker, Kulkarni, and Travis, 2007; Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey, 2007).

This shift has coincided with recognition of a ‘transformational’ approach to leadership, distinguished from ‘transactional’ understandings (Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino, 1991; Bass and Avolio, 1993; Burns, 1978; Mary, 2005; Jung, Yammarino and Lee, 2009). These authors propose that transformational leaders build or change culture but that transactional leaders operate within existing cultural norms (Bass and Avolio, 1993). Transformational leaders have been identified by four characteristics denoted as the 4 ‘Is’ of transformational leadership (Avolio, et al., 1991, p.9): ‘idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration.’

Bass and Avolio (1993, p.112) argue that transformational leaders integrate creative insight, persistence and energy, intuition and sensitivity to the needs of others to ‘forge the strategy-culture alloy’ for their organisations. In contrast, they suggest that transactional leaders are characterised by contingent reward and management-by-exception styles of leadership. Essentially, transactional leaders develop exchanges or agreements with their followers, pointing out what the followers will receive if they do something right as well as wrong. They work within the existing culture, framing their decisions and action based on the operative norms and procedures characterizing their respective organisations (Bass and Avolio, 1993, pp.112, 113).

The connection between leadership actions, organisational culture and a systems approach expressed by a number of authors (eg. Attwood, Pedler, Pritchard, and Wilkinson, 2003; Hardina, Middleton,
Montana, and Simpson, 2007; Jaskyte and Dressler, 2005; Northouse, 2010; Schein, 2004; and Yukl, 2010) is a major constituent of the current project. Social workers are trained to think systemically, operating in a ‘person-in-social-context’ paradigm (Jarvis, 1995, p.79). This service delivery practitioner approach with consumers finds congruence with an organisational ‘whole systems development’ framework (Attwood et al, 2003), to which I now turn.

‘Whole systems development,’ complexity and indigenous thinking
Attwood et al. (2003, p.xv) identify leadership as a key component of whole systems development, which draws from biological complexity imagery to depict how organisations actually function. Eschewing a ‘mechanistic process’ (Lewin and Regine, 2001, p.24), complexity thinking proposes that biological interactions in living organisms offers a striking illustration of the way in which individuals and workplace groups operate (Morgan, 2006). Change in this context is seen as ‘emergent’ (Olson and Eoyang, 2001, p.11) – its outcomes cannot be predicted – and employs ‘referent power’ that workers accord to colleagues they esteem, as distinct from conventional Weberian legitimacy as the source of power (French and Raven, 1959). I suggest that this is how ‘change agents’ exercise influence in social service organisations. Emergent ‘whole systems’ leadership is transformational. I argue that complexity organisational thinking represents the context in which the ethical, professional and cultural identity of the social work leader and manager best functions.

The notion of biological interactions as a parallel to intra-organisational dialogue and action offers a remarkable connection to indigenous Māori thinking on organisations – better described as ‘organisms.’ ‘Tipu Ake’ (Te Whaiti-Nui-a-Toi, 2001) symbolises organisations as a living tree (figure 2) in which leadership is conceptually removed from Western ideas of chief executives at the summit of the hierarchy. Instead,

Leadership [is] the courage that germinates the seed of a new idea and moves it forward out of the undercurrents. Tipu Ake defines leadership as collective – many individuals can contribute to it. It is defined, recognised, and nurtured by those who support it. (Tipu Ake, 2001, p.7)

Constructing a social services leadership model
How, then, does social services leadership thinking – encompassing ideas of empowering people, advocacy for social change, professional ethics, leadership and management standards and connecting the academy and professional practice – connect with the organic, emergent, indigenous strands depicted in figures 1 and 2? Change management processes frequently fail (Attwood et al, 2003,
p.30; Kotter, 1995). Leaders, say Attwood et al. (2003, pp.31, 32) must pose the ‘right systemic questions:

1. How can I best use my position … to assist us all to make sense of what is going on, so that together we can contribute to sustainable change?

2. How do I lead this organisation so that we can make the best possible contribution to the improvement and wellbeing of those we serve?

3. How can I share my ideas and emerging goals in ways that do not stultify debate but assist learning about the ‘bigger picture’?

4. How do I ensure that we implement plans that we have agreed with partners? (italics added)

**Figure 2: Tipu Ake** (Source: Te Whaiti Nui-A-Toi, 2001)

The enquiry engendered by the inclusive quality of these ‘systemic questions’ contributes to the notion of a model of human services leadership. The literature provokes thinking and analysis to construct such a model: personal mastery and proficiency (Senge, 1992; Ulrich, Smallwood, & Sweetman, 2008); self-management (Drucker, 1999); servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Van Dierendonck, 2011); authentic leadership (George, 2003; Luthans & Avolio, 2003); exemplary leadership (Kouzes and Posner, 2007); and shared leadership (Houghton, Neck, and Manz, 2003). I suggest that the qualities in these approaches express the ethical values of human service leadership.
Discipline of personal mastery and personal proficiency (Senge, 1992; Ulrich et al., 2008)

Senge (1992, p.141) articulates ‘personal mastery’ as a manifest ‘desire to create’ with two implicit elements. We ‘continually clarify what is important to us’ and likewise ‘continually learn to see current reality more clearly.’ Exercising these disciplines, Senge says, will introduce the process of ‘creative tension’ because the vision of where we want to be – ‘what is important to us’ – throws into stark relief the reality that we are not there yet. The ‘journey’ to realise the vision never ends and in fact ‘is the reward.’

Senge’s ‘personal mastery’ enjoys conceptual connections with Ulrich et al.’s (2008) ‘personal proficiency’ (2008, p.129), which they propose as the ‘ultimate rule of leadership.’ These authors suggest that ‘investing in yourself’ starts by ‘knowing yourself’ – a phrase which draws on transcultural traditions. To be ‘personally proficient,’ say Ulrich et al., is ‘to practice clear thinking; know yourself; tolerate stress; demonstrate learning agility; tend to your own character and integrity; take care of yourself; [and] have personal energy and passion’ (2008, p.129). I suggest that these qualities express the social work ideal of the practitioner fulfilling Jarvis’ (1995, p.79) concept of the ‘person-in-social-context:’ that social work conceives of its practitioners – including leaders and managers – as human tools in their interactions with others.

Self-management (Drucker, 1999)

Peter Drucker frames his thoughts on ‘self-management’ in the context of ‘knowledge workers’ (1999, p.164) – a phrase he coined in 1959. Knowledge workers secure entry into the workforce by ‘formal education;’ they are ‘specialists’ who need organisations for their distinctive contribution; and because organisations must access their knowledge, the knowledge worker owns the tool that organisations require (Drucker, 2001, pp.307-311). Drucker conceives knowledge workers as ‘associates’ rather than subordinates. ‘Once beyond the apprentice stage,’ says Drucker, ‘knowledge workers must know more about the job than their boss does … in fact, they know more about their job than anybody else in the organisation’ (1999, p.18). Taking responsibility for self-management is to demonstrate ethical responsibility, thus enhancing social workers’ professionalism and potential for a collaborative, empowering culture of their employing organisation.

Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Van Dierendonck, 2011)

Servant leadership has been compared with transforming leadership, an archetypal model to which James MacGregor Burns made seminal contributions. Sendjaya and Sarros (2002, p.58) cite Burns (1978):

[Transforming] leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with each other in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality … But transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral (italics in original) in that it raises
the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, thus it has a transforming effect on both.

Graham (1991, p.111) points out that Burns’ ‘end-values’ for transforming leadership ‘stress the importance of universal moral principles such as liberty, justice and equality’ – and thus appropriately place the concept within the social justice sphere espoused by human services. Graham sees in Greenleaf’s (1977) servant-leadership characteristics which address the danger of excessive leadership hubris, particularly in the context of hierarchical power and the loss by workers of ‘critical thinking capacity’ in the face of that power (1991, p.111).

Robert Greenleaf’s (1977) question cited in Graham (1991, p.112) effectively defines servant leadership in a way that places it within the ethos of social services:

…do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will he benefit, or, at least, will he not be further deprived?

(Italics in original; bold added)

**Authentic leadership** (George, 2003; Luthans & Avolio, 2003)

George unequivocally identifies authenticity as the primary quality of leadership. The Oxford English Reference Dictionary (1996, p.92) defines ‘authentic’ as ‘genuine, reliable or trustworthy.’ George sees authenticity as ‘being true to the person you were created to be’ (2003, p.14) – similarly, Luthans and Avolio cite ‘ancient Greek philosophy “To thine own self be true” (2003, p.242)’ in tracing ‘the history of authenticity.’ George makes the insightful comment (p.15) that ‘the problem comes when people are so eager to win the approval of others that they try to cover their shortcomings and sacrifice their authenticity to gain the respect and admiration of their associates.’ I suggest that authentic leadership is an indispensable condition for servant leadership.

‘Servant’ and ‘authentic’ leadership express the underpinning ethical values for a social service leadership model. I propose that conscious actions and strategies which express those values require Kouzes and Posner’s (2007, pp.15-21) ‘exemplary leadership practices.’ To ensure that ‘values espoused become behaviours demonstrated,’ exemplary leadership behaviours need to become ‘practices which make permanent.’ The five exemplary practices connect with Houghton et al.’s (2003) ‘SuperLeadership,’ which facilitates shared leadership.
Five exemplary practices (Kouzes & Posner, 2007)

Kouzes and Posner’s (2007) ‘exemplary leadership practices’ offer social service practitioners a pathway to a holistic, integrated influence on the cultures of their employing organisations. Exemplary leadership demonstrates commitment to professional ethical codes and thus the value of integrity in leadership actions. Cho and Ringquist’s research (2011, p.53) found that ‘managerial traits of competence, integrity, and benevolence share an important common dimension … the trustworthiness of managerial leadership.’

The five practices (Kouzes and Posner, 2007, pp.15-21) are:

1. **Model the way**: leaders create and model standards of excellence

2. **Inspire a shared vision**: the leader’s vision of what could be translates to inspiring others to share that vision. Leaders must know their constituents and have their interests at heart

3. **Challenge the process**: a change-agent function. Leaders analyse their situation, recognise the good ideas of others, seek knowledge and learn from it, take risks, innovate and get new ways adopted.

4. **Enabling others to act** via development of trust which facilitates effective teamwork

5. **Encourage the heart** by recognising constituents’ contributions and goal achievement. Members feel well regarded or even loved by their leader.

Shared leadership (Houghton, Neck & Manz, 2003)

Shared leadership is defined by Houghton et al. (2003, p.124) as ‘a process through which individual team members share in performing the behaviours and roles of a traditional, hierarchical team leader.’ Self-leadership, say Houghton and his colleagues, is a pathway to shared leadership. They propose that the typical designated (‘vertical’) team leader roles of ‘influence, wisdom and guidance’ are distributed to team members in shared leadership scenarios. The team ‘can and should’ participate in ‘five primary leadership behaviours: transactional, transformational, directive, empowering and social supportive’ (p.125).

‘SuperLeadership:’ facilitating shared leadership

encouraging, and supporting followers in the development of personal responsibility, individual initiative, self-confidence, self-goal setting, self-problem solving, opportunity thinking, self-leadership, and … ownership of their work’ (2003, p.133).

A social services model of leadership practice
The social services leadership model suggested in this paper is an integrated, inclusive approach to exercising leadership actions. Kennedy (2008) uses Hofstede’s (2001) ‘power distance’ research to propose a culturally endorsed model of outstanding leadership in New Zealand [which] combines inspirational enthusiasm … low assertiveness, pragmatism and perseverance. Low Power Distance and the strength of egalitarian beliefs mandate a style of leadership that is participative, grounded in the team, and provides the opportunity for shared success leadership model (2008, p.424).

Integrating personal mastery and proficiency, self-management, servant, authentic, exemplary and shared leadership, and building on Kennedy’s proposed New Zealand model, I define leadership in these terms:

Table 1: A Social Services Model of Leadership Practice

| Social work leadership is a journey in which we come to know our real selves [authenticity/personal mastery/proficiency], our values [ethics], and our abilities, thus determining how we exercise trustworthy, transformational, transparent leadership [authentic leadership], locating where we belong by virtue of our contributions to our profession [self-management], predicated on enabling others [exemplary leadership] to accept the challenge of self and shared leadership [indigenous/servant/shared leadership]. |

Tensions engendered by ‘New Public Management’ thinking
The contrast between such an organic, values-based statement and the state’s ‘managerialist project’ (Luckcock, 2006, p.268) driven by successive Labour and National governments through the State Sector Act 1988, the Public Finance Act 1989, and the Fiscal Responsibility Act 1994 (Scott, 2001) could hardly be greater. These statutes created an output management orientation expected to contribute to Government outcomes, replacing the entrenched focus on input controls. ‘Government by contract’ (Schick, 1998) was inaugurated. Performance agreements specified contractual outputs for which ministers held chief executives accountable, and financial delegation instruments devolved output accountability to managers down the line. These changes were underpinned by public choice theory, principal-agency theory, transaction cost economics and NPM. Public choice and agency theory was applied to award social service contracts to NGOs. Contractual relationships produced a
profound shift in management thinking and practice in the public sector away from lack of accountability and a risk-averse mentality which referred decision-making upwards, and a bureaucratic ‘take it or leave it’ attitude towards service consumers and customers. O’Donoghue, Baskerville and Trlin (1999) argue that the state’s ‘managerialist project’ resulted in substantial management and professional practice changes in statutory social services.

This research project will seek to determine whether the management and cultural changes noted by O’Donoghue et al (1999) are evident in the non-governmental social service agency, Barnardos, selected for the project. The project will also analyse perceptions of management thinking and practice in the emerging profession of social work vis-à-vis the NPM model described by Scott (2001), Boston et al (1996), and The Treasury (1987). Examination of critics, advocates and analysts of NPM (eg Chapman & Duncan, 2007; Easton, 1995; Gregory, 2001, 2003; Hood, 1991; Hughes, 2003; James, 1992; Kelsey, 1995; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Schick, 2001) will provide the project with a balanced perspective of NPM. Academic writing on public sector administration, the normative precursor to the post 1987 NPM revolution, will be analysed to lay down a context for the cultural changes with which the project is engaged (eg. Lynn, 1996; Rosenbloom, 1998).

**Why is this research worth doing, and why is it needed?**

The project’s research question is posed in the context of figure 1: ‘How have the senior management and board of Barnardos exercised leadership in a non-governmental social service organisation from November 2003 [the appointment date of the current chief executive] through 2011?’ The aim of the project is ‘to articulate and describe a model of change management for social service organisations in New Zealand using a case study on Barnardos.’

The Barnardos project is a rare opportunity to engage with the leading child and family service NGO in New Zealand for research and potential professional collaboration. Gaining access to social service organisations for research is difficult. More than 18 months’ negotiation was required to secure Board consent for the project. The research is worth doing for that reason alone.

The research is needed to develop a model of leading cultural change in a social service organisation for practitioners. Dooley’s (1997) transformational change in a ‘turbulent environment’ is a prime reality for practitioners functioning in formal or peer-recognised leadership positions. Identifying and analysing processes initiated by those leaders in Barnardos potentially offers social service professionals a ‘road map’ of how one entity carried out a change programme. Although as a qualitative enquiry findings will not be generalisable, Cooper and Schindler (1998, p.133) suggest that
‘a single, well-designed case study can provide a major challenge to a theory and provide a source of new hypotheses and constructs simultaneously.’

The overarching response to the questions posed (why is this research worth doing, and why is it needed?) is that the project is a new topic by virtue of its examination of leadership actions, management of culture change – common enough – but within a social service conceptualisation of leadership and management never before attempted in a New Zealand context.

The purpose of the research is to understand and articulate change processes in a New Zealand social service organisational context for the benefit of managers and leaders functioning at diverse levels (Jones, Watson, Hobman, Bordia, Gallois, & Callan, 2008; Oshagbemi & Gill, 2004). The author’s proposal to Barnardos’ chief executive Murray Edridge connected personal interest as a former mid level manager in Community Probation Service (CPS), professional applicability and academic rigour to construct a coherent project. Relevant elements from the proposal are presented to introduce the task at hand. These elements constituted the basis on which the Chairperson of Barnardos Board accepted the research proposal. They are therefore of seminal importance to the endeavour.

Table 2: Selected Elements of Research Proposal accepted by Barnardos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Why Barnardos and why from 2003 onwards?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murray Edridge’s appointment as Barnardos CEO in November 2003 is the rationale for the project title date. I selected Barnardos for the project on several criteria, underpinned by my perception that no more critical issue faces the fabric and coherence of our society and professional social services than the preservation and enhancement of quality of life for children and families. The commitment of Barnardos to that endeavour is for me the single most important reason for the project. If a research project is able through its findings to contribute to organisational excellence and directly benefit services to children and families, it adds incalculable value to our communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other factors which influenced the choice:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Barnardos reputation as an innovative organisation repositioning itself as a significant advocate for families and children and wider social policy sector in addition to direct social service provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Its emergence as an widely known advocate of legislative change in the Crimes Act section 59 public debate and subsequent repeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Its commitment to social innovation, leadership and management development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Service integration and community partnership perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Barnardos core values identified – respect (diversity is embraced), integrity, passion and success;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
excellence, innovation, ongoing learning, continued improvement. I believe that passion should
characterise all social services and also research.

- Barnardos statement of commitments to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, integrity in leadership, advocacy,
  social justice, self-determination and sustainable organisational capacity and leadership are
evidence of a social work vision which is fundamental to my professional life.

2. What exactly am I looking for?
The focus of the research project emerges out of Barnardos Strategic Plan ‘four key themes,’ which
express the synergies between the organisation and the research objectives. I intend to construct a
model of leadership and management of cultural change unique to a New Zealand social service
organisation enabling insights not previously researched. The project offers this potential because in
this context I perceive leadership and management to be a conceptual field of practice within the
principles and practices of social work and associated professions, not as a function of historical
management theory. This approach constitutes the distinctiveness of the whole research undertaking.

Barnardos’ ‘key themes’ are:

Community:
- Communities of practice encompassing collaborative partnerships and cross sector diversity
  relationships
- Sector leadership role by Barnardos collaborating and working with others
- Iwi, hapu, whanau relationships

Integration
- Service integration for maximisation of cohesiveness and efficiency
- An expectation that consumer needs will be met
- Recognition of professional disciplines

People and leadership
- Barnardos’ people ‘professionalism and passion’ and their ability to build relationships as ‘key to
  the effectiveness of its work’
- ‘Personal, professional and leadership development’ of Barnardos’ people
- A ‘shared and inclusive style of leadership’ both internally and externally

I see the leadership development of Barnardos people as increasing their capacity for [1]
transformational change in ‘turbulent environments where change is imminent and frequent’ (Dooley,
1997, p.92); [2] social innovation, organisational learning, ‘communities of practice’, complexity,
and technology; and [3] applying an interdisciplinary model of leadership and management drawing
from health, education and social work professional contexts and incorporating concepts of action
learning, systems understanding of professional leadership actions, organisations as living
organisms, change as unpredictable, and professional workers acting as change agents.
Barnardos Māori strategy: Ngā pou e whā – Four cornerstones

- Partnership and participation as critical underpinning characteristics of the organisation are integrated in all policy and practice

3. Value to Barnardos and the Board

I summarise the value of the proposed research to the organisation and the Board in these terms:

- Identifying processes which enable critical evaluation of organisational outcomes that Barnardos seeks, ie. tracking the quality of service to consumers and other stakeholders attributable to excellent management and leadership of frontline workers as management’s internal customers
- Opportunity for Barnardos governance and strategic leadership team to engage with me as a recent practitioner and manager with research skills and commitment to excellence in research and social work services – in brief, as a consultant rather than simply as a researcher
- Potential for ongoing collaboration via agreed projects, workshops and enhancement of practitioner-academic relationships for mutual benefit eg continuous quality of services to consumers and stakeholders
- To provide a middle and frontline management and practitioner perspective on Board and SLT leadership and management actions
- The benefits of a qualitative research project which will significantly contribute to the critical reflection needed to create a ‘learning organisation’

Models of organisational culture change

Organisational culture and management of change

This project will argue that the culture of the research subject organisation is appropriately analysed from a range of cascading perspectives (figure 1). ‘Culture’ is a social anthropological term defined by Piddington (1960) as ‘a body of knowledge, belief and values’ (p.4) applied to human communities. Piddington’s description provides the framework of reference for this project and specifically for the cascading models in figure 3.

Organisations as cultures

The variety of cascading perspectives on organisational culture and the management of change (figure 3) will enable an examination of their applicability as frameworks of reference in the project. Thus, organisations are ‘communities of practice,’ described by Wenger as ‘groups of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise’ (Wenger, 2000, p.139). They are ‘learning organisations’ (Senge, 1992) whereby group interactions produce unintended consequences as well as being predicated on theories of ‘learning disciplines’ and ‘learning
disabilities’. The cultural icons of organisations, eg ‘brain,’ ‘machine,’ are redolent of their inhabitants’ perceptions of their organisation’s identity (Morgan, 2006). Organisations may be diagnosed using Schein’s (2004) schema, and similarly with models associated with cultural change (Dibella, 2007; Osborne and Brown, 2005; Kotter, 1996; Lewin and Regine, 2001; Olson and Eoyang, 2000).

**Figure 3: Perspectives of organisational culture and change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anthropoligical model: Culture as a concept for human communities (Piddington, 1960)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National culture and organisational structure</strong> (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede &amp; Hofstede, 2005; Kennedy, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High and low context cultures</strong> (Hall, 1989; Trompenaars &amp; Hampden-Turner, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisation and culture</strong> (Martin, 2002; Tayeb, 1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisations as cultures:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power distance (Hofstede, 1980, Hofstede &amp; Hofstede, 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities of practice (Wenger, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning organisations (Senge, 1992)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions, beliefs, artefacts (Schein, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultures of management: Executive, engineer, operator (Schein, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphors: machines, organisms, brains, political systems, psychic prisons (Morgan, 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living organism; indigenous Māori model (De Geus, 1999; Te Whaiti Nui-a-Toi, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Models of organisational change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force field (Lewin, 1947a, 1947b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical-rational/normative-educative/power-coercive (Chin &amp; Benne, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional / transformational (Bass &amp; Avolio, 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned or emergent change; innovation (Osborne &amp; Brown, 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change management processes and errors common to change (Kotter, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex adaptive model (Olson &amp; Eoyang, 2000, Lewin &amp; Regine, 2001; Uhl-Bien &amp; Marion, 2008; Uhl-Bien, Marion &amp; McKelvey, 2007)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Organisational culture: definitions and descriptions**

An understanding of organisational culture is intrinsic to the project. Schein (2004) defines organisational culture as:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 2004, p.17)
Schein (2004) analyses the constituents of organisational culture in a sequential ‘building block’ mode that informs the ‘levels of culture’ in both directions (Figure 4). Schein’s ‘levels’ will offer a useful diagnostic tool in the research project, in terms of the process by which levels inform each other, and equally the elements that Schein considers make up the three levels.

**Figure 4: Levels of organisational culture**
(Source: Schein, 2004, p.26) (Reproduced by permission)

The research will utilise Schein’s schema of organisational culture as a starting point for analysis, but it is anticipated that dimensions unique to Barnardos will emerge.

**Perceptions of change from diverse hierarchical levels**
Gardner’s (2006) observation of differential perception of change dependent upon the player’s hierarchical levels connects with the research findings of Jones et al. (2008) from an Australian hospital setting. Citing Kanter et al. (1992) these researchers observe that

Change poses special challenges at different levels of the organisational hierarchy, as different aspects of the change process may be salient to employees and may be evaluated quite differently … Kanter et al. (1992) … concluded that there are at least three key groups within organisations during change: change strategists at the top of the hierarchy, change managers in middle management (supervisors), and change recipients at lower levels (non-supervisors). They argue that change managers and recipients experience a greater sense of
threat about the consequences of organisational change than do change strategists, and are most likely to lose status and jobs during major change (p.297).

Using the ‘three key groups,’ Jones and her colleagues found (2008, p.308) that executives verbalised positive perceptions of the change process; that frontline non-supervisors articulated negative reactions; and that supervisors (middle managers) were the least assertive. These findings convey the importance in my research of interviewing Barnardos staff at different levels in the organisation, including Board members, although it must be noted that Jones et al. used a conventional ‘top down’ change management perspective in their research. Organic complexity approaches might offer a different perception.

Models of organisational change
The author suggests that models of change essentially fall into two categories: structured, rational approaches typified by Lewin’s (1947) classic and enduring ‘force field’ diagnostic; Chin and Benne’s (2009) empirical-rational/normative-educative/power-coercive triumvirate; Kotter’s (1996) change management process model; and Bass and Avolio’s (1993) transactional/transformational model. Approaches using an emergent, complex adaptive type include Olsen and Eoyang (2000); Lewin and Regine (2001); Osborne and Brown (2005) who contrast planned vis-à-vis emergent change; Uhl-Bien, Marion and McKelvey (2007); Uhl-Bien and Marion (2008). Emergent complexity thinking offers a pathway for ‘second order’ culture change described by Van de Ven and Poole (2009) as ‘a break with the past basic assumptions or framework [in which] the process is emergent as new goals are enacted … the outcome is unpredictable because it is discontinuous with the past’ (p.872).

Dibella (2007, p.232) offers an overview of ‘how [organizational] change has been described and explained’. He describes variant terminologies relating to the ‘nature of the change itself:’ incremental or transformative (Nadler, 1988; Mohrman, 1989); first order versus second order (Bartunek and Moch, 1987; Nadler and Tushman, 1995); transformational, transitional or transactional (Ackerman, 1984; Burke, 1994); and episodic versus continuous (Weick and Quinn, 1999). Essentially, these terms differentiate between superficial and substantive change (Dibella, 2007, p.232). Transformational and transactional leadership styles constitute a tension to be explored in the project.

Dibella (2007) also differentiates between two distinct factors contributing to change: those ‘that stem from internal, developmental pressures and those that are pursued due to the need for organisations to adapt to or respond to changes in their external environments’ (Dibella, 2007, p.232). Identifying internal and external sources for organizational change bears a potentially direct relationship with the
project’s research question: How have the senior management and board of Barnardos exercised leadership in a non-governmental organisation?

Conditions in which change occurs are usefully described by Dibella (2007). Arguing from an organisational development perspective, he has constructed a diagram of two axes to enable understanding and management of the changes perceived by ‘participants or stakeholders and the managerial implications’ (p.234). One axis measures the appeal of the change to the participants (desirable/undesirable); another its perceived likelihood (inevitable/impossible). Change managers benefit from this analytical framework, which provides an appropriate diagnostic tool for the research project organisation (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Scenarios in how change is perceived
(Source: Dibella, 2007, p.234) (Reproduced by permission)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appeal</td>
<td>Inevitable</td>
<td>Impossible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desirable</td>
<td>1. Expedite</td>
<td>2. Encourage and Empower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undesirable</td>
<td>3. Reframe</td>
<td>4. Revitalize or Retrench</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Potential limitations

Potential limitations emanate from ethical and practical sources. Article space prevents articulation of a proposed research methodology; suffice to say that focus groups and interviews of Barnardos Board and senior managers (‘Senior Leadership Team:’ SLT) are planned, as well as middle and frontline managers and frontline service workers. At a time of further organisational restructuring in Barnardos (July 2011), constraints on candid or unbiassed evaluations of leadership actions by staff initiating or affected by those actions may limit the value of their evaluations. Ethical attitudes in respect of sensitive information – easily traced in a small to midsize organisation–towards an outside researcher is another potential limitation.

Conclusion

This doctoral research programme is one of three strands which contribute to a coherent and global perspective on leadership, management and career pathways in social service organisations. The second is a research project which aims to construct the first set of social work leadership and management standards outside the United States. This project has secured the support of the Aotearoa
New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW). The third is a co-authored book with academic colleagues from Australia and the United Kingdom, ‘Shaping your career in human services,’ whose central notion derives from the idea that at every transitional point in a human service career there will be core qualities to understand, integrate and draw upon in exercising leadership. The book also examines how human service career leadership is influenced by diverse cultural constructs – national culture or character; organisational culture and climate; and professional ethics. The second and third strands will provide a useful context and contribution to the thesis.

References


