Collaborative Individualism
and the End of the
Corporate Citizen

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We are observing a battle for power in modern organisations that has enormous implications for management. It has nothing to do with the battle between unions and management—that is just a minor skirmish left over from past wars. The real battle is the one taking place between the individual and the organisation itself.

The changes that have taken place in organisations during the last decade—the move towards more loosely coupled network systems—when considered together with the cataclysmic transformations of People Power in Eastern Europe at the close of the 1980s, signal the end of the obedient 'good citizen'. This is the era of empowerment of the individual. It is also the era, paradoxically, in which we have recognised most clearly the interdependence between individuals. It is the age of *collaborative individualism*.

Collaborative individualism is a world view held by a growing number of people in Western society. In some organisations it is a management ideology—a view held by the dominant coalition in the organisation. In others it is a complete culture, a shared world of meaning, with its own patterns of values and characteristic systems of action. Collaborative individualism is the dominant culture of network organisations: it stresses the need for individuals to work together with others towards a common vision and mission. But it also stresses their emancipation, their freedom from groups, organisations and social institutions.

Collaborative individualism and the emergence of strategic networks go hand in hand. They are part of the same mindset—part of the reaction against hierarchies, the focus on individual competence and the search for collaboration.

Moreover, the emergence of networks in practice has torn the individual apart from the static fabric of the hierarchical organisation. It has emancipated the individual. Some have found this new freedom both strange and threatening. Yet there is little doubt that networks are acting as a school for a new world view.

This chapter explores the emancipation of the individual, the shape of the world view we have called collaborative individualism, and its conflict with the older cultures of the previous blueprints. It traces the roots of collaborative individualism in the historically held values of Western society, and considers the key role of information technology in supporting the development of the new world view into a major force in Fourth Blueprint organisations. Finally, it looks at the characteristics and competencies of the collaborative individual.

THE EMANCIPATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL

The central value of collaborative individualism is that of autonomy for the individual. As early as 1984, in our Frontiers study, the word 'autonomy' was used by CEOs more often than any other to describe the core values of their organisations. In the years since, it has come to lie at the core of a world view that stresses the freedom of the individual from *groups*, *organisations* and *institutions*.

Freedom from groups

Managers in the West were so exposed to the rhetoric of teamwork over the past few decades that they came to take teamwork as the most important index of good management. However, with the emergence of the Fourth Blueprint came a very different vision of ideal relationships between people in organisations. They were to be populated by empowered, autonomous individuals who worked together with others, often in groups, but who were not bound by loyalty to those groups as an end in itself. They were bound by a common mission and collaborated, as autonomous individuals, towards its achievement.

Collaborative individualism reflects, in part, a set of values about relationships that strategic managers would like to see in their organisations. The Frontiers, Silicon Valley and Silicon Forest interviews with Australian and US managers in entrepreneurial organisations, reported earlier, were saturated with the language of collaborative individualism. Managerial literature from the UK, and to some extent Japan, also reflects an awakening awareness of this newly developing set of values. It is a world view held not only by managers, however; it is also held by others in the organisation. As we shall see, the autonomous 'self, incorporated' view of the 'yuppie', and the world view of the 'gold collar' worker (Kelley, 1985), essentially express the same values.

It is important to understand that collaborative individualism is a post-teamwork, not an anti-teamwork, phenomenon. In the Frontiers study, Australian CEOs rarely referred to teamwork, not because it was unimportant, but because it was vitally important (Limerick et al., 1984). It was so important that it was a 'prior assumed' for effective organisations. During the 1960s and 1970s it was their dominant problematic issue, and they devoted significant amounts of their resources to the developmen6t of teamwork in both permanent and matrix teams.

The language of organisational development was the language of teamwork. But that language changed in the 1980s. It did not go back to the destructive individualist corporate buccaneer of the 1960s: it expressed a new concern with a new set of problems that lay at the other side of teamwork. The word 'autonomy' began to dominate managerial discourse, followed closely by words and phrases such a 'proactivity', 'initiative', 'accountability', 'creativity' and so on.

From one perspective the very strength of managerial commitment to teamwork in the 1970s brought with it its own set of problems. A weakness, as Jung argued, is rarely

the opposite of a strength—it is the overuse of a strength (e.g. humility, overused by, say, 10 per cent becomes lack of confidence). In this case, an over-emphasis on teamwork and collectivism had led to an homogenising effect on human endeavour. Group cohesiveness turned out to be a double-edged sword. It could lead to 'groupthink', an unquestioning loyalty to the norms of the group regardless of the demands of the situation (Janis, 1972). The organisational development practitioners of the 1970s were acutely aware of the problem and took great pains to warn of it. But the strength of the ideological commitment to teamwork tended to push relationships in many organisations past the point of functional teamwork towards a dependent reactive groupiness.

Zaleznik makes the point strongly: "The tail has come to wag the dog. In our obsession with team-work, collectively we have failed to recognize that individuals are the only source of ideas and energy' (Zaleznik, 1990: 9). Such a situation was highly dangerous. As one Australian CEO put it: "I want people who will continue to ask questions when the rest of the team has stopped!' Moreover, the focus on teamwork did not fit comfortably with the challenges of discontinuity. Network organisations demanded fewer structural relationships between people, not more. Discontinuity meant that it was important that people be given space to think laterally, take risks and deal with change themselves without the constraints of groupthink.

Loosely coupled systems are not uncoupled systems. While individuals in network organisations had to take responsibility for their own actions, they also had to be collaborative, and work together. Thus, in collaborative individualism, collaboration and individualism came together into a balance—not a balance in the sense of a compromise between the two, but in the sense of the uncompromising, simultaneous assertion of both.

The balance between individualism and collaboration, and the distance of that system from the 1970s notion of teamwork, is difficult to capture. Several metaphors tend to be used to express very similar images. For example, Bailey, of the ANZ Bank, argues: 'I do not want a team of football players: I want a team of cricketers!' North American readers may want to substitute the term 'baseball players' for cricketers— the meaning is the same. He does not want employees who feel that if they miss the tackle someone else in the team will make it. He wants someone who will confront that 100 kilometre an hour ball on their own. Yet that person has to be collaborative. The person who normally bats flamboyantly, for example, has to be willing to dig in when things get tough for the team. Similarly, the head of a government utility expresses very much the same balance of individualism and collaboration, but more simply: 'I want a team of individuals.'

The same theme is expressed in different ways by a number of Australian CEOs. They tend, for example, to reinterpret the findings of Peters and Waterman (1982) into their own terms. They do not mind talking of 'partnership'—as long as the mature adult individual partner is stressed, not the amorphous '…ship'. They do not mind talking about 'entrepreneurship'—as long as this does not mean a return to the isolated ruthless 1960s buccaneer. They talk about proactive individuals who collaboratively pursue the goals of the organisation.

An equivalent concept of collaborative individualism has been recognised by some, but by no means all, of the more recent commentators on Western management. Viewed from the perspective of the Third Blueprint, the idea is difficult to grasp: from that point of view, collaborative individualism can be seen to be just a normal part of teamwork. Dyer, for example, has noted that: 'teams are collections of people who must rely upon group collaboration if each member is to experience the optimum of success and goal achievement' (Dyer, 1977).

But this deals only with the importance of collaboration, not collaborative individualism! Heller is closer to the concept when he argues that:

'Team' is one of those much overworked words in management: it suggests a cohesion and unity that you rarely get and may not really want all the time; effective management is the combined contribution of different individuals working along both independent and collaborative routes toward both individual and common objectives. (Heller, 1984: 270)

Even closer is the comment of Clifford and Cavanagh in their study of successful CEOs:

> One of the toughest qualities of winning CEOs to generalise about . . . is their combination of strong individualism on the one hand, and propensity to have one or a few partners and their strong belief in team playing on the other. They seem to sense—intuitively or analytically—that the complexity of their growing companies demands a multiplicity of skills at the top that they cannot fully provide. (Clifford and Cavanagh: 1988: 135)

Attempts to interpret such concepts in the framework of the Third Blueprint miss the point: collaborative individualism asserts that the individual is the basic building block of the organisation. Organisations—network organisations—are no longer seen as being made up of interlocking teams and committees to which individuals are assigned in order to achieve organisational goals. They are made up of mature, autonomous, proactive individuals who collaborate to achieve personal and organisational goals and who, through this collaboration, create what we call the organisation.

Freedom from the organisation

The organisation provides a learning place for the development of shared values and beliefs among its participants. These values and assumptions become part of the world views of their participants. A paradigm shift in organisations therefore brings with it a new world view, a new set of expectations about the way people should relate to each other, and a new set of values and aspirations. The shift from the Third to the Fourth Blueprint brought with it such a change in world views.

Table 5.1 summarises broad features of the world views of those who gained their formative experiences in Third and Fourth Blueprint organisations.

The Third Blueprint: Corporate citizenship

The organisations of the 1960s and 1970s had stable structures with defined, stable roles, and with predictable career paths. For individuals in such a system, self-identity and role become fused—the individual is what he or she does. As Emerson wrote, 'Do your job and I shall know you' (cited in Sullivan, 1990: 17). Identity (which is usually defined as that which remains the same while participating in change) was provided

Table 5.1 Differences in world views

Corporate citizenship (Third Blueprint) pre-1980	Collaborative individualism (Fourth Blueprint) post-1980
Identity	
• Role as continuity	• Self as continuity
Psychological contract	
• Lifelong employment	• Issue-related contract
Values	
• Loyalty	• Integrity
• Service	• Maturity
• Field integration	• Field independence
Processes	
• Commitment	• Negotiation
• Career the responsibility of the organisation	• Career the responsibility of self
• Relating to the system	• Traversing many systems
• Membership of middle-range organisations	• Collaborating with others on issues

By the continuity of role. This was reinforced by a psychological contract of membership, of lifelong employment. For people in such a system a long-service award is not trivial—it represents the successful completion of reciprocal rights and obligations, the fulfilment, over time, of citizenship of the organisation.

Those in the integrated organisation come to value those things that support this self-definition. They value a group of behaviours that can broadly be termed 'citizenship' behaviour: altruism, conscientiousness, loyalty, teamwork, good relationships with others and general contributiveness to the system (Bateman and Strasser, 1984). In

sum, they develop what Bateman and Organ (1983) refer to as the 'good soldier syndrome' (Bateman and Organ, 1983; Organ 1988).

The essence of the integrated organisations of the Third Blueprint is an unshakeable nexus between the individual and the structure. People within them find that changes in organisational structure are often personally devastating because they imply a redefinition of self. Part of the psychological contract is for employees to give high levels of commitment to the organisation in return for security, mentorship, growth and development. The responsibility for the development of the individual's career lies in the hands of the organisation and its human resource planning systems. In a very real sense, employees 'belong' to the organisation—they and their careers are owned by it!

The Fourth Blueprint: Collaborative individualism

Individuals within loosely coupled network organisations simply cannot use structure and role as a definition of identity. They find themselves moving in and out of a whole series of systems of action, many of them temporary, which demand different role definitions. The structures in which they are engaged are temporary affairs, treated by participants as tools, as temporary expedients to achieve collaborative action. Structures can be changed to meet discontinuous events, and provide impossibly flimsy templates for definitions of identity.

Under such conditions, individuals turn to self-definition as an axis of continuity. They define their identities in terms of the unique set of vectors that they regard as self. For such individuals, the ability to tolerate the uncertainties of engaging in multiple temporary systems of action demands a mature understanding of self. Those in network or collaborative organisations therefore become very concerned with self-mapping, getting to know and understand self, and getting to develop a mature self-acceptance.

This focus on self is not to be confused with selfishness, even though the latter is part of the commonly held stereotype of those who went through their formative organisational experiences in the late 1970s and 1980s—the young urban professionals or 'yuppies'. Those who have experienced the organisations of the 1980s, including yuppies, value collaboration, for they have come to terms with the need to network in order to deal with discontinuity.

However, the relationship they develop with others is not one of commitment to the organisation—it is one of commitment to the issue, to the mission and vision of the collaborative enterprise. It is the yuppie, for example, who supported Geldof's Band Aid and Live Aid in its mission to relieve starvation in Ethiopia, and who has rejuvenated the Green movement.

In effect, the individuals in the network organisation go through a process of what Tucker calls 'mentally incorporating' themselves. Each individual becomes 'You, Inc.' (Tucker, 1987), networking and collaborating with others towards common missions. The individual accepts responsibility for self, for their own career development across many systems of action, and for the achievement of the

organisational mission, and in return expects sufficient autonomy and empowerment to unfold activity. Deutschman quotes Bell South's Roy Howard as saying: 'the younger workers coming in now aren't as prone to mould their lives to fit our environment' (Deutschman, 1990: 23). They form an alliance with the organisation—they do not become owned by it.

This rejection of being imprisoned by the organisation is expressed in its fully fledged form by a movement towards establishing real contracts with the organisation, or to becoming a consultant. Manter (1989) notes the propensity of the newer generation to prefer the freedom of consultancy. She quotes the case of Stuart Bauman, formerly a human resources vice president in a large company, who 'in his mid-30s, began to see colleagues in their 40s and 50s who seemed "stuck and miserable"'. Said Bauman: 'I realized as I watched those people in their misery that I needed now while there was still time, to learn how to make career moves.' Bauman became a consultant with Towers Perrin (Manter, 1989: 66). Such people, says Manter, want freedom to set their own hours, to exercise their own values, and to make as much money as their talents will allow.

This world view is a far cry from the compliance of the corporate citizen. It has much in common with the attitudes of what Kelley calls the 'gold collar' worker:

> These new workers are the gold collar workers, and they hold the key to the future . . . Perhaps the most significant difference (between them and white collar and blue collar workers) pertains to the nature of their work and the freedom and flexibility with which they conduct it. They engage in complex problem solving, not bureaucratic drudgery or mechanical routine. They are imaginative and original, not docile and obedient. Their work is challenging, not repetitious, and occurs in an uncertain environment in which results are rarely predictable or quantifiable. Many gold collar workers don't know what they will do next, when they will do it, or sometimes even where. (Kelley, 1985: 8)

Collaborative individuals are emancipated by discontinuity, empowered by knowledge and driven by values. They collaborate with others because they agree with their values and the joint mission, and not because of their commitment to the organisation. This is the 'inside-out' credo expressed by Covey, Chairman of the Covey Leadership Center:

> The inside-out approach says that private victories precede public victories, and making and keeping promises to ourselves precedes making and keeping promises to others. Inside-out is a continuing process of renewal, an upward spiral of growth that leads to progressively higher forms of responsible independence and effective interdependence. (Covey, 1990: 4)

To keep promises to ourselves while in an organisation requires that our values and those of the organisation are congruent. So the collaborative individual searches for clarity in the mission and vision of the enterprise. They work from the basis of mature self-acceptance, integrity of purpose and a commitment to the issues. Within the value congruence the psychological contract with the organisation is negotiative, not one of commitment—indeed, the average tenure for the knowledge worker, or the

'gold collar' worker, is less than four years (Kelley, 1985). They want, argues Drucker, autonomy and mobility (Drucker, 1989b).

As we shall see, it is not just knowledge workers who develop the values of collaborative individualism. Strategic alliances in general 'may be fragile, disrupting work force loyalty and stability' (*Personnel Administrator*, 1987). Moves towards award restructuring, multiskilling and other practices needed to handle discontinuity demand of others workers that they too cut the bond between themselves and the structure. This leads to a de-emphasis on job security which, as Doyle argues, 'will be increasingly regarded as anachronistic by employees throughout the next decade' (Doyle, 1990: 37). This, in turn, leads to a new view of the world as individuals negotiate with, and contract into, organisations with compatible values.

Commitment versus negotiation

The world of the good corporate citizen is one of reciprocal rights and obligations between the individual and the organisation. These come from commitment—an identification with the organisation. When the young worker joined the organisation in the 1960s it was with every expectation that they would develop a lifelong career within it. The organisation, in turn, was committed to nurturing and mentoring the career of the individual.

The relationship between the collaborative individual and the network organisation, in contrast, is negotiative and contractual. The individual moves between systems and organisations, developing their asset-base of skills and abilities and using these to contract into each organisation. They *are* value driven, and are keenly committed to the values and mission of the organisation. But they are decidedly not committed to the organisation as an end in itself or to blind loyalty to its commands. The organisation becomes not the end, but the means—the means to fulfilling the individual's own objectives and the agreed mission.

The severance of the bond between the individual and the organisation can be experienced as extremely painful by many in the organisation, for it is precisely the new negotiative contract that the good citizens find so distasteful. As their organisation moves from Third to Fourth Blueprint, they find the very things they stand for—loyalty and commitment—despised, and the things they hate—the pursuit of selfish ends—rewarded.

For example, the merging of colleges of advanced education with universities in Australia has left a trail of personal devastation among college members. They were previously asked to commit themselves to their college and to the development of its programs, and were rewarded with secure career paths. With the mergers, however, they were thrust on to their own resources, with demands that if they were to obtain promotion or even remain in the organisation, they should develop their own research assets and become autonomous, marketable research academics. The paradigm shift, the transformation, was so swift that many members found the new contractual, demanding, negotiative milieu alienating and offensive and felt betrayed by the system. What is 'emancipation' to one person can be experienced as abandonment by

another. Moreover, it was so swift that many in the system failed to see the change, and clung to role and occupation as their way of recognising *others*:

> We find corporate actors hard to conceptualise, hard to analyse, and certainly hard to access. Like the drunk who looks for his lost money under the street lamp because that is where the light is, we continue to rely on occupation even though its meaning may be changing in significant ways. (Sullivan, 1990: 29)

This issue will be re-examined below when we discuss the problem of cohort culture conflict.

Freedom from institutions

The world views described above are also extended to the individual's relationships with others in the external political and social environment. They are part of the changing social dynamics of the turn of the decade, with important implications for organisations such as political parties and unions. Lash and Urry (1987) see as two fundamental features of disorganised capitalism:

> . . . the development of an educationally based stratification system which fosters individual achievement and mobility and the growth of new 'social movements' (students', anti-nuclear, ecological and women's movements etc.) which increasingly draw energy and personnel away from class politics . . . [and the] decline in the importance and effectiveness of national-level collective bargaining procedures in industrial relations and the growth of company and plant-level bargaining. This accompanies an important shift from Taylorist to 'flexible' forms of work organization. (Lash and Urry, 1987: 5)

The good citizenship view of the 1970s and early 1980s was echoed in the social relationships of Third Blueprint participants.   These social relationships were structured in terms of membership of middle-range organisations and institutions such as unions, professional associations, Rotary, political parties or churches.   The essential contract was commitment to the organisation itself in return for continuity of membership with its intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

Group membership skills were important to effectiveness in such an arena, and individuals and organisations alike devoted much of their time and other resources to the development of team-oriented interpersonal competencies. Overall, the good corporate citizen of the tightly coupled organisation became the good citizen of the integrated society, belonging to, and bound by obligations to, its various institutions and teams within them.

In contrast, the social and political relationships of the collaborative individual are very different. They do not seek commitment to middle-range organisations for a definition of self or for direction on values and beliefs. Membership of organisations such as unions and political parties has been dwindling over the past few years (Lash and Urry, 1987) in favour of broader collaborative issue-oriented systems such as the Green movement, one-off charismatic or television churches, law reform movements and like systems, or in favour of more local processes such as plant-level negotiations

in which the individual can have greater impact. Collaborative individuals do not 'join' such enterprises in the sense of membership, with its reciprocal rights and obligations; they collaborate and network with such movements on an issue-by-issue basis.

The social upheaval associated with empowered individuals has been a time of trial for those who cling to Third Blueprint world views. The basic nature of the psychological contract between people and organisations has changed. Individuals can no longer rely on the comfort of lifelong employment. In the first half of 1986 alone, the Fortune 500 companies in the US shed 2.2 million jobs (Tucker, 1987). In Australia the restructuring of the public sector has seen individuals having to reapply, not always successfully, for their own jobs. As the nexus between the individual and the permanent job has been shattered, so have the identities of those within them, who have been left with an anxious reappraisal of their own skills and assets. This, in turn, has involved a search for a new, independent identity.

The situation is made even worse by the progressive collapse of corporatism—of the larger institutions of class, political party and religious organisation that also gave meaning and identity to the individual. This leads to a further 'decentring' (Lash and Urry, 1987) of identity, a 'liminalty' (Martin, 1981) or threshold-like quality of the personality. People simply do not know who they are. As their class and political identities evaporate, they lie on the mere threshold of self-identity.

There is a pessimistic, melancholic note in much of the post-modernist literature on the atomism of both society and the individual. But on the positive side, the trauma of decentring may be balanced by the discovery of an emancipated identity, defined not by the external agencies of social and institutional membership, but by self.

There is also an enormous challenge to middle-range institutions themselves, which are fighting for survival. In Australia, the most senior union official, Kelty, gave warning to his unions of the need to 'transform the psyche of the nation'. Unions and other middle-range institutions cannot continue to rely on historical membership obligations for functioning; they have to clarify and redefine their mission in modern terms and offer real services to their clients. We agree with the overall thrust of the argument advanced by Lash and Urry (1987): we are not seeing the end of unionism—or of large political parties and churches for that matter. But we are observing the beginning of a period of turmoil and restructuring as they attempt to come to grips with the post-modern era.

Perhaps the most subtle and profound changes have occurred at national and international levels where we have moved to the age of the *diaspora*—the dispersion of people who share values and missions. As Toynbee, in a remarkably prophetic passage, argued just before he died:

The present-day possibility of participating simultaneously in a number of different organisations promotes individual liberty. Allegiances to world-wide diasporas, which cut across allegiances to local organisations, are both a safeguard for individual

liberty and milestones towards the social unification of mankind on a global scale. (Toynbee and Ikeda, 1989: 142)

Country after country in eastern Europe in 1989 found itself liberated from the institutionalised domination of the Party by the momentum of diasporas—of networks of individuals collaborating towards a common vision.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLLABORATIVE INDIVIDUALISM

The development of collaborative individualism has its roots in two key factors: *continuity* and the continuation of a tradition, and *discontinuity* and the impact of modern information technology.

Continuity: The continuation of a tradition

It is impossible to understand the emergence of collaborative individualism in the West without seeing it as an extension of deep-seated historically held values. The Christian-Judaic heritage (particularly the reformist Christian tradition) has always been individualistic. The West's historical consciousness is saturated with images of the individual soul standing alone before God for judgment. As St Peter reminds humanity in Kipling's *Tomlinson*:

> The race is run by one and one,
> > And never by two and two.

Henley, that other apostle of the nineteenth century rationalism, asserts in the same vein:

> I am the master of my fate
> > I am the captain of my soul. (Henley, 'Invictus', 1907)

Such images are particularly a part of Anglo—American colonial traditions, with their archetypal heroes, the colonial pioneers, striding out into the winds of the unknown continents, alone and unafraid. To be sure, while these images survived strongly in the US, they were diluted in Australia by an anti-establishment emphasis on mateship, with its origins, perhaps, in the scarcity of women and the need for the early settlers to survive in the face of the machinations of the New South Wales Rum Corps. In the management area, these individualistic values were strengthened and translated into managerial ideology by humanist psychologists such as Maslow and McGregor, with their emphasis on the proactive individual and self-actualisation.

The move towards teamwork and groupwork during the 1950s and 1960s is thus more surprising than the re-emergence of individualism in the 1980s. Perhaps it is best understood in terms of the dominance of the Second and Third Blueprints during that period, with their focus on social causation and integrated systems. Perhaps the uneasy combination of individualistic values and authoritarian organisations that dominated the First Blueprint had to give way to a period in which we learned the art

of integration and collaboration—and that, in turn, provided a more suitable background for the re-emergence of individualism.

Whatever the historical argument, there has been a strong stream of individualistic images emerging in the past few years, which represents a departure from our immediate past of teamwork and mateship. What we are observing is the strengthening of one stream of values in Western society, a subtle change of emphasis in myriad values. It is significant to note, for example that a survey of the heroes of British youth i9n the mid-1980s placed Geldof and Thatcher in the top three! And those who participated in, and gave drive to, the emancipation of eastern European countries echo the same mix of a diaspora of youth giving massive support to autonomous, independent older leaders like Gorbachev and Walenska.

It is traditional to think of Western individualism as existing in sharp contrast to the Japanese group achievement ethic and Japanese corporate paternalism. Yet there is considerable evidence t6hat the Japanese system is also changing in response to the pressures of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Mroczkowski and Hanaoka, for example, report that the Japanese employment relationship is being redesigned:

> Japanese employees realized that they could not place all their reliance on their companies and that they would have to start relying on themselves. Today, the latest catchword amongst personnel specialists in Japan is 'employee self-reliance'. It is not only that the attitudes and expectations of employees—especially younger employees—are changing, but the companies themselves are creating programs designed to promote new attitudes of self-reliance. (Mroczkowski and Hanaoka, 1989: 50)

They have, in effect, modified the lifetime employment system in favour of greater mobility between organisations, and a more independent set of attitudes. This is not to argue that Japanese organisations are becoming 'like the West', but it does suggest that Japanese employees and organisations are beginning to confront similar problems to those in the West.

Discontinuity: The arrival of modern information technology

The final catalyst that enabled a more atomistic structure of isolated individuals to become a proactive system of collaborative individuals was information technology. The groundwork had been laid in the empowerment of the individual through increased educational and living standards. Improved information technology allowed those individuals to share the same vision and to co-ordinate their action despite loose structural coupling. It allowed a movement from physical commuting to telecommuting—people were able to come together without being together in space. It allowed the use of coupling devices such as just-in-time technology, which orchestrated the efficient collaboration of dispersed units.

But modern communication technology did more than facilitate networking. It turned out to be an instrument of further networking. It turned out to be an instrument of further empowerment for both the broader body of individuals and their leaders. It

allowed two simultaneous changes in social power relationships. First, it brought information to a multitude of individuals in society, and since knowledge is power it brought power to the people. Second, it facilitated the simultaneous *centralisation* of information; it allowed CEOs and prime ministers alike to achieve immediate feedback on events and sentiments in their loosely coupled systems.

Paradoxically, while information technology has given power to the people, it has also given power to the transformers. Reagan, Hawke and Thatcher alike, in their heydays, were able to manage by instant plebiscite (by reading the polls) and to virtually ignore their middle-range party institutions—as long as they stayed within the limits of popular opinion. There were obvious stylistic differences between them—the empathetic Hawke, institutionalised Reaganism and the cold but implacably committed Thatcher—but the overall patterns of their activities were remarkably similar.

Individuals and leaders in business organisations found themselves with similar opportunities. Managers and workers at the coal-face were able to obtain more information about the mission and activities of their organisation and of the broader networks of which it was a part, and this empowerment enabled them to take autonomous action. CEOs were able to use information technology to communicate their aspirations and values to dispersed employees without the tight control provided by enormous corporate headquarters. The CEO of a merged large multinational, for instance, was able to contemplate the development of a new corporate headquarters. The CEO of a merged large multinational, for instance, was able to contemplate the development of a new corporate culture through his own personal example. 'I am just going to get out there and show them,' he said. And, with the aid of information technology, that is exactly what he did (Limerick et al., 1984).

The issue of information technology will arise again in Chapter 7, under the rubric of corporate culture, and again in Chapter 8 when we look at the tricky problem of placing checks and balances on the power of transformational leaders. For the moment it is sufficient to note that the development of sophisticated techniques of communication enabled the world view of collaborative individualism to become translated into a feasible social system. This translation has not been experienced as positive by all. Indeed, as observed earlier, the move to a new system, based on different values, with different patterns of interaction, will be experienced as abhorrent by many.

A CLASH OF WORLD VIEWS: PRE-BOOMERS VERSUS YUPPIES AND YIFFIES?

If organisations are schools for learning world views, then it is not surprising that different age cohorts come to share similar world views. Those born just before or during World War II together with the leading edge of the baby boomers (1935-47), having been raised predominantly in Third Blueprint organisations, share the values of the good corporate citizen. Now in their mid-forties to mid-fifties, they find themselves in conflict with a new cohort with very different values. That cohort, the

second wave of the boomers, particularly those born in the 1950s, has experienced a world of discontinuity and has become the quintessential generation of collaborative individualists—the yuppies. Between the two generations lies a gulf of misunderstanding and distrust, which has acted, tragically, to speed the exit of older workers from the workforce.

> The 1970s and 1980s—and particularly the Fourth Blueprint period from the recession of 1982 onwards—were marked by a sharp drop in the proportions of older persons staying in the workforce. This was particularly so in Australia:

The exit of older workers in Australia in the 1970s and 1980s saw the most significant rate of decline of older worker participation of any country in the Western World. (Western Australian Commissioner for Equal Opportunity (WACEO), 1989: 49)

Between 1966 and 1984, for example, the number of men in the workforce between the ages of 55 and 64 declined by 23 per cent (WACEO, 1989: 49). The fact that there is a similar crisis for the 4-55-year-old in the West has only recently been recognised (Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council, 1985; 1986).

To a certain extent this problem may be related to stereotypes of decreasing abilities and poor performance among the aged. But most of these, as Radford points out, are myths (Radford, 1987). Parnes, another authority on ageing, agrees. He notes that factors such as these account for:

> . . . small proportions (between 10 and 25 percent) of the total unemployment experience . . . a substantial amount of unemployment experience appears to result either from simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time, or from personality characteristics that tend to go unmeasured. (Parnes, 1982: 56)

Parnes has a point. The middle-aged worker, the good corporate citizen, was in the wrong place at the wrong time. As organisations attempted to manage the discontinuity of the 1980s by moving towards loosely coupled systems, so the very qualities and values that they had just a short while before prized and rewarded became perceived as irrelevant, threatening and dangerous to the survival of the organisation. The leading edge of collaborative individuals began to take over the helm of organisations in that period; older CEOs who shared their world view began to seek out those who would represent the new ideas and place them in key roles.

This new power elite turned to the problem of attempting to change the strategies, structures and cultures of their organisations. The situation was aggravated and accelerated by the recession of 1982, in which companies found themselves under pressure to lose their organisational fat as well as to change their structures and cultures.

The result of these pressures was an onslaught on middle managers, particularly those in large corporate headquarters and in low-skill and clerical jobs. It is easier to remove people than to change them, and so the good corporate citizens, the cohort now in their mid- to late forties, came under attack. The rate of unemployment in that group during that period rose sharply, resulting in both 'middle management

wipeout'and a sharp reduction in low-skill and clerical occupations (Wilks et al., 1988). The age of the knowledge worker, the gold collar worker, the young urban professional, the collaborative individual, had arrived.

In Australia, this age was reflected in moves to devolution and decentralisation, the destruction of corporate headquarters, internal networking, award restructuring, a move to multiskilling, the devolution of responsibility for quality to the individual through programs such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and entry into world markets through strategic alliances. Subcontracting, off-shore manufacturing, and other collaborative arrangements designed to deal with discontinuity.

Ironically, it was often the most progressive caring firms of the 1970s that now perceived themselves to have the biggest problem, for they had poured a great deal of their resources into training supervisors in supportive management and teamwork during the 1970s. As Bateman and Organ (1983) point out, such supportiveness may lead to an increase in citizenship behaviours, particularly if the felt obligations that result from it cannot be expressed in increased productivity. That, of course, is the position of those in integrated organisations who have high levels of interdependence with others.

Such progressive organisations now found themselves fearing the very qualities of continuity and loyalty that they had fostered and rewarded before the paradigm shift. Those who were loyal and identified with their roles were now perceived to be rigid, non-entrepreneurial and inward-looking. And so they were fired, made redundant, put in the hands of relocation experts, or offered early retirement. As Tucker (1987) pointed out: 'The message is clear: There is no security in working for big organisations anymore' (Tucker, 1987: 58).

The extent and the speed of the change of expectations was reflected in a study conducted with a group of redundant Canadian 50-year-olds and relocation agents (Limerick, 1989). The redundant managers were stunned by their removal after so many years of loyal service and good performance appraisals. They simply did not understand the world views of those who had fired them. As one observed: 'You know, the terrible thing is that the person who fired me is himself not loyal to the organisation.'' Stereotyping works both ways. The individualists saw the 50-year-old as rigid. The latter saw the younger managers as selfish, materialistic and unpredictable.

The clash of cohorts is not going to get any easier. The latest generation of those coming into organisations are even more individualistic than the boomers. These are the 'busters'—the generation that is smaller in numbers as the baby-boom bubble burst in the mid-1960s. Now in their mid-twenties they hold the views captured in this chapter's opening quote from Deutschman:

> What, you ask, has gotten into the brains of these kids? Nothing less than a new attitude towards life and work—a quirky individualism that is characteristic of the baby-busters . . . These are the Employees Who Can Say No . . . (Deutschman, 1990: 22-3)

As Deutschman argues, the generation gap is widening:

> Welcome to the new generation gap. Margaret Regan, a consultant at Towers Perrin, holds focus groups at *Fortune 500* companies, bringing together employees of all ages. 'It is amazing to see how puzzled the different generations are by each other,' she says, 'There's a real clash of values in the workplace right now. The older managers think that if the sho doesn't fit, you should wear it and walk funny. The baby-busters say to throw it out and get a new shoe. Their attitude says that *they* are going to make the choices.' (Deutschman, 1990: 23)

This is the generation that Deutschman calls the 'yiffies'—young, individualistic, freedom-minded and few.

The problem of the exit of middle-aged and older people from the workforce is a serious one. Western economies cannot afford the brain drain represented by the exit of the good corporate citizen:

> . . . as the supply of younger workers dwindles, employers will be forced to hire older workers as is now becoming evident in certain industries in the United States. (Scoones, 1988: 88)

For these and other economic reasons, many developed economies are attempting to curb the rise in early retirement and older unemployment. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful until the problem of the clash of world views has been addressed—until corporate citizens are given an opportunity to come to terms with the new world view of collaborative individualism.

Ironically, relocation consultants attempt to help redundant older workers by getting them to map their assets, to market themselves and to move into new contracts. That is precisely the world view of collaborative individualism that the older worker tends to find so distasteful—and to a certain extent threatening. Not only is the new psychological contract between the person and the organisation very different from the one they value, it also makes demands on a new set of skills and competencies that they have never had to develop or exercise.

CHARACTERISTICS AND COMPETENCIES OF THE COLLABORATIVE INDIVIDUAL

The world view of collaborative individualism worked through into network organisations makes special demands on those within them. Central to the world view is an image of the nature of the collaborative individual. This image is partly prescriptive and partly descriptive, for it describes the values and competencies individuals should have—and in many cases have come to develop. Overall, the central vision of the collaborative individual is reasonable coherent. The shorthand descriptions above have included adjectives such as 'autonomous', 'proactive', 'collaborative' and 'mature'. But the concept is so important to the processes of network organisations that it is worth further exploration.

Looking across our studies and the emergent literature on managerial and organisation development (e.g. Morris, 1987), it is possible to identify a number of key characteristics, competencies and skills of collaborative individuals. They are:

- autonomous
- proactive
- empathetic
- intuitive and creative
- transforming
- politically skilled
- networking
- mature

Each of these fields of characteristics needs to be developed in greater detail.

Autonomous

Collaborative individualism focuses on the autonomous individual. As we have noted previously, even in 1984 the one word that appeared more frequently than any other as a d3escriptor of corporate culture was 'autonomy' (Limerick at al., 1984). It is true that the assertion of autonomy is not always unconditional. Loton, former CEO of BHP, notes that 'No one is truly autonomous'. Nevertheless, he places emphasis on the need for individuals who will use whatever space is available for making their own judgments and decisions.

The concept of autonomy implies both a relationship with the organisation and a set of characteristics that are needed to operate that relationship successfully. Thus the concept of delegation is subtly being transformed in current management usage into the concept of devolution. To delegate in managerial terms means to pass on to others the right to make decisions on your behalf. To devolve is to pass on to others the right to make decisions on their own behalf. To make your own decisions on your own behalf requires a certain set of personal qualities. Thus 'autonomy' describes neither personality nor role: it describes what Bales more accurately called 'personality-role space'—the person-in-process (Bales, 1970).

Proactive

Autonomy and proactivity go hand in hand. The autonomous individual must accept responsibility for acting collaboratively with others in the interests of the organisation as a whole. They have to initiate synergies with others in networks; they have to be able to cope, to fix their own problems and those of their groups: 'the need is for . . . the will to manage . . . and so we are saying to people—you do not have to be reactive, you musty go out and plan and act on the business' (Limerick et al., 1984).

Autonomous, proactive individuals do not adapt easily to the middle ranks of Third Blueprint organisations. They are more easily described thus: 'You will find them in the corners, making a nuisance of themselves, pushing at the limits.' However, they

are prized in network organisations, where they are recognised as 'self-driven', 'doers', 'ambitious' people with a 'bias for action' (Limerick and Cunnington, 1987; Peters and Waterman, 1982). Such proactivity, more often than not, is combined with a healthy pragmatism—with what Australian managers call 'a smell for the dollar', 'common business sense' and 'a good knowledge of what the business is about' (Limerick and Cunnington, 1987).

It is interesting to observe within this set of values the re-emergence of an interest in the concept of 'will', or willpower. Early psychologists were vitally interested in the capacity to commit oneself to action. One seminal early discussion was contained in an essay by William James, who described 'will' as 'attention to an ideal' (James, 1905). This comes close to the current concept of proactivity, for it implies that proactivity and a clear concept or vision of the ideal are intimately interrelated.

Proactivity does not imply a random atomistic readiness to go into action: it implies the steady attention to and pursuit of an ideal, and the readiness to act on things in that pursuit. Without an ideal there is no will. As the following chapters will point out, the management of network organisations rests heavily on the identification of the mission and vision of the organisation. The development of proactivity relies in part on techniques for enabling managers to envisage the desired goal.

Empathetic

Managers are no longer required to be the rational analysts of a decade ago. The development of vision and mission and the communication of such symbolic processes demands that they be *managers of meaning*. The glue that holds the network organisation together is a common, corporate culture, a shared world of meanings that allows independent, autonomous action to be focused and collaborative. The management of this common world of meanings calls on empathetic capacities among managers that were largely irrelevant in the Third Blueprint.

The focus on the development of empathy in managers has brought with it new areas of interest and lively debate in the management literature. The 1980s saw a reawakening of interest in the use of the Jungian personality typology, represented in the burgeoning use of the Myers-Briggs personality inventory and the Hogan and Champagne Personal Styles inventory among managers.

The Jungian typology distinguishes between the more linear 'thinking' and 'sensing' personality functions on the one hand, and the more holistic 'intuitive' and 'feeling' functions on the other. Its widespread use in industry in the 1980s provided a cognitive bridge between rationality and empathy; by identifying intuitive and feeling functions, and by allowing managers to map the extent to which they have developed these capacities, they gave holism and empathy legitimacy.

The use of such instruments has had two potentially very important spinoffs. First, the Western stereotype of the rational thinking-sensing manager has come under challenge as just that—a Western stereotype, and a male Western stereotype at that. It

has become clear that other societies, such as those based on Zen–Buddhism, give as much or even more weight and legitimacy to the affective functions of intuition and feeling, and that management in such countries (e.g. Japan) has benefited from such capacities (Pascale, 1978). Moreover, the debate has highlighted the extent to which these functions are associated with gender stereotyping in the West. Males are seen to be thinking-sensing, without much feeling or intuition. In fact the latter qualities are frowned upon in males: as Neville Wran, the past premier of New South Wales (born in the workers' suburb of Balmain) put it in a moment of stress, 'Balmain boys don't cry!'

Females, on the other hand, are stereotypically permitted to be irrational, intuitive and dominated by feelings. The new focus on managerial empathy in organisations, combined with the legitimacy given to affective personality functions, is helping to legitimate the role and presence of women in management. Indeed, some authors have been led to suggest that if such functions are better develop0ed among women, and if they are becoming increasingly important, then women may have a distinct edge over men in the managerial stakes (Shakeshaft, 1987; Still, 1988). There is an entire debate surrounding this and related issues that is explored in further detail below.

Related in some ways to the use of the Jungian typology is the current interest in brain laterality and personality functioning. This area of study has become one of the most controversial in psychology, and is no less so in managerial psychology (see, for example, Gazzaniger, 1983; Levy, 1983).The debate has emerged from the earlier Nobel prize-winning work of Sperry and others on split-brain patients (patients who have had the corpus callosum that connects the two hemispheres of the brain severed, either by accident or as a treatment for one very severe form of epilepsy). A number of authors, after surveying the evidence, have suggested that the right hemisphere is primarily responsible for holistic, intuitive, empathetic processes, while the left hemisphere, which tends to be dominant in most people, is responsible for logical, analytical processes, including speech.

For many years, the thesis was impossible to test satisfactorily, because the only feasible way of observing brain functioning was through the Aero-Encephalogram (AEG)—which, with a 5 per cent mortality rate, was not a preferred experimental procedure! Modern techniques, including CAT scans and biochemical procedures, have enabled more sophisticated research.

In doing so, however, the picture has become even less clear and more controversial. This has not stopped a number of authors in the field of management and training from writing unconcernedly about 'right-brain' abilities. Peters and Waterman, for example, argue that excellent organisations place great store on, and are very sensitive to, the creative, intuitive, and empathetic right-brain processes of their members (Peters and Waterman, 1982).

While it offers a potentially promising area of research, the relationship between brain laterality and personality is so complex that no simple generalisations can be made or accepted with equanimity. There is nothing inherently unacceptable in using phrases

such as 'right-brain' activity as a sort of metaphorical shorthand for intuitive, holistic, empathetic processes (indeed, words such as those in the Jungian typology are so cumbersome that we, too, have often been driven to use the shorthand form!), as long as this does not imply a simplistic acceptance of the laterality thesis.

So the reader should be warned: we are prepared to be academically naughty for the sake of brevity, and may slip into left-brain, right-brain language. In the interests of caution, however, we prefer to use the longer field of phrases, such as feeling, empathy and intuition.

Overall, the emergence of network organisations, with their focus on the management of the symbolic, has placed anew focus on the role of empathetic capacities among managers, and has set new challenges for management and organisational development. This issue is developed further in Chapter 7, when the management of corporate culture is examined.

Intuitive and creative

Associated with an emphasis on empathy in collaborative individualism is a focus on non-linear, intuitive and creative intellectual capacities. An increasing number of managers and academics alike have attacked the West's business and management schools for their exclusive emphasis on linear rational analysis (Limerick et al., 1984). Such an approach was part of the Third Blueprint.

The management of discontinuity, however, has placed a greater emphasis on the need for non-linear, entrepreneurial, intuitive, creative abilities. Managers in the Frontiers study were unequivocal: they felt that managers should be 'creative', 'imaginative', 'innovative', 'able to think laterally' and 'able to ask "what if ?" questions'.

The development of such abilities requires that management schools move away from their current educational paradigms towards an increased focus on process learning (Limerick et al., 1984).

Transforming

Part of the dynamics of the Fourth Blue print has been an overwhelming interest in what, following the work of Burns, has come to be called 'transformational leadership'. Burns' ideas will be reviewed in Chapter 7 when we look at the processes of transforming organisational culture. For the moment it is instructive to look very briefly at the characteristics of the transformational leader.

In a Pulitzer Prize-winning book, Burns distinguished between 'transformational' and 'transactional' leaders (Burns, 19789). Transformational leaders create new situations and processes; transactional leaders work by increment. Thus transformational leaders focus on the institution as a whole, creating a new vision of the possible and inspiring others to follow. Transactional leaders, on the other hand, have a more

instrumental focus, contracting and transacting with others in the operation of a stable system.

Transformational leaders are visionary, inspirational figures possessing certain ideals and goals. They are charismatic and can inspire intense emotion. To do this, they must empathise with and hold accurate perceptions of others.

Burns' distinction between transformational and transactional leaders is close to the distinction between 'leaders' and 'managers' made by Zaleznik (1977). Leaders, Zaleznik argues, create images that excite others, that develop options: managers, in contrast, maintain systems by enabling others, by limiting options. While the latter tend to relate according to roles, leaders prefer solitary activities, relating intuitively and empathetically to others. Leaders, in other words, tend to be individualistic, collaborating with others intuitively and empathetically through a shared vision of the possible. Overall, as Bass (1985) argues, transformational leaders move their members to concern for growth, achievement and development, and point them towards the key issues of the group and organisation.

In view of the rate and kind of change occurring in organisations today, it is understandable that current management literature should focus on transformational leadership. The move from Third to Fourth Blueprint organisations involves a quantum change in organisational strategy, structure and culture. Changes towards such organisations therefore cannot be accomplished in an incremental fashion; they are, axiomatically, transformational. Organisations in the 1980s were, in practice, characterised by massive attempts to transform their organisational cultures and structures, which demanded skills in transformational leadership. In the words of CEOs in the Frontiers study, managers in Fourth Blueprint organisations must have a readiness to abandon precedent and continuity, to 'be strong', and to 'mould and change organisations' in new directions.

Organisational transformations are usually led from the top. Some writers argue that below that level the need for transformational leadership diminishes, and that for organisational effectiveness, both leaders and managers are necessary. Leaders create goals, while managers help implement them. Those in Fourth Blueprint organisations would be less than comfortable with the whole direction of the current debate. They would be particularly ill at ease with a forced artificial distinction between leaders and managers. As Zaleznik notes: 'This concept of leadership changes the idea that "it is lonely at the top" to the idea that the position "at the top" involves shared purposes, mutual trust and implicit support' (Zaleznik, 1990: 13)

While transformational programs are led from the top, many of those who implement them require similar transformational skills. And even after transformation into Fourth Blueprint organisations, the network organisation faces such a chronic state of flux and discontinuity that it makes constant demands on transformational capacities—on 'leadership'—among a majority of its managers and indeed among many of those below the formal level of management. Under conditions of discontinuity every Indian has to have some of the qualities of the chief. This is a

point made strongly, for example, by Vivian Chadwick, operations manager of Scotrail, in a film on his organisation's training program.

He reports that Scotrail is telling:

> . . . large numbers of staff in very important positions that . . . the bureaucracy can help if you use it right . . . if the bureaucracy gets in your way, cut through it, slash it, or at the extremes . . . kill it and ignore it because we must not let it stop us achieving what we want to achieve . . . Authority is what you take, not what somebody gives you. (Scotrail, 1985)

What is required of managers in Fourth Blueprint organisations is that they have the flexibility to use both managerial and leadership skills, and the judgment to choose the right skill at the right time.

Politically skilled

The capacity to transform a large number of people into a collaborative network and to keep it in touch with the rest of the environment makes enormous demands on political skills. When change is incremental, relatively stable relationships can be maintained between the organisation and its environment. These require few novel transactions between them   Discontinuity, however, requires that organisations conti9nually move into new fields, disturb current states of equilibrium and push at the boundaries of the possible. To do so safely and effectively requires effective political processes between the organisation and its environment.

The internal dynamics of loosely coupled systems also demand effective political processes within the organisation. The changing nature of alliances and networks within and between organisations requires that their members have 'a capacity to see the beg picture', 'understand the political climate' and 'deal with the political environment' (Limerick et al., 1984) of both the organisation and its environment.

Managers had become largely politicised by the mid-1980s. In the Frontiers study, for example, they nominated 'government decision-making' as one of the most dominant threats to their organisations. They could not simply treat these as constraints and react to them. Part of the ethos of the proactive individual is that they act on the environment, and so managers set out to act on the governmental environment. One Australian CEO notes, in retrospect, that: 'our biggest breakthrough was in developing techniques for dealing with government'.

The success of Iaccoca in dealing with the interface between Chrysler and the US government underlines the same point. The collaborative individual today has to be able to 'see the big picture', 'have a helicopter view', 'understand the political climate' and 'deal with the political environment' (Limerick et al., 1984).'

There are three aspects to this set of political skills. First, each individual needs to develop a macro-view of the organisation, a holistic appreciation of its relationships with its environment. Second, managers need to be sensitive to and understand the internal political processes of the organisation, to be part and parcel of what the

Japanese call its *nemawashi* so that they can network with others, and form long-term relationships. And third, managers need to be skilled in political transactions—in recognising and forming coalitions, in the use of power and sometimes force, and in processes of negotiation and compromise.

At first glance such skills seem a far cry from the picture of the open, harmony-oriented manager of the 1960s and 1970s, striving to create a larger arena of shared information between all. Some have been led to suggest that modern organisations may and sometimes should focus on a 'power' approach to organisation development (Dunphy and Stace, 1988). The truth is that the old-fashioned harmony virtues remain important, for without them there can be no trust, but that managers in networks also require political skills. The final chapter of this book raises a whole host of questions about power relationships in network organisations. Neither managers within them nor organisational analysts can afford to ignore such issues. John Akers, IBM's CEO, comments:

> You have to be politically capable. You have to be able to sell your ideas, to get people on the team. Those who can't get things done, who can't get people to work on their problems, don't rise as high as people who can. (cited in Waterman, 1987: 205)

Networking

Loosely coupled systems are so characterised by multiple systems of action that individuals within them need a capacity to network between their elements. They are held together by common cultures, shared worlds of meanings and values. The management of these cultures often requires empathetic interpersonal contact, backed up by acute political sensitivity. Therefore an integral part of the development of shared corporate cultures is the presence of individuals who can, as Pettigrew, after an English study, puts it, 'walk the talk' (Pettigrew, 1986).

Peters and Waterman noted a similar concept in their excellent organisations in the US; they were characterised by 'MBWA'—Management By Walking About. Australian managers in network organisations are just as dedicated to the need for networking. In the Frontiers study we came across one divisional manager who refused to have an office. His secretary had an office, and was able to page him where necessary. He was constantly 'walking about'.

There are two elements to these networking skills. The first is the capacity to see the broader picture; networking is not a random process—it is a purposeful process driven by an overarching vision of the whole and an understanding of its various parts. The second is an empathetic sensitivity to the values of each of the sub-cultures, a capacity to deal with the symbolic management—a fascinating area that will be revisited in the next two chapters.

Mature

The task of networking throughout very different autonomous systems makes enormous demands on the maturity of the individual, who is no longer able to cling to a specific role within a coherent structure for a sense of identity. Managers in Third Blueprint organisations know who they are because they know *where* they are. Managers in Fourth Blueprint organisations do not have such continuity.

The problem of identity may be somewhat less precarious in Japanese management systems. A stable social structure defines identity for its members, and allows them to traverse a range of work roles without insecurity. But the atomistic, individualist, nuclear-family structure of Western society offers no equivalent comfort. The result is that managers in network organisations in the West have to develop a mature self-concept. They have to know who they are regardless of where they are. This calls for a considerable degree of self-insight and self-acceptance. They have to understand and accept their own identity values and relate these to the core values of the organisation as a whole, for this is what provides a continuity of relationship with the organisation.

Zaleznik made a similar observation in distinguishing between managers and leaders. Managers belong to their environment and depend on memberships and roles for identity; leaders, on the other hand, feel separate from their environment, and depend on mastery of events for a sense of identity (Zaleznik, 1977). In loosely coupled systems most participants require an autonomous, field-independent identity. Even lower participants experience pressures towards multiskilling, broadbanding and a more flexible range of working roles, which tear them away from narrow tolerated identities towards mature independence.

Such a self-concept, if it is to survive discontinuity, must be flexible and robust enough to grow and evolve. Fourth Blueprint organisations, therefore, focus on organisational development strategies that allow their managers to map and understand themselves and their strengths and weaknesses and to continue to learn by self-evaluation (Limerick and Cunnington, 1987). Even with such facilitation, the demands of networking through multiple systems of action and of handling their political interfaces can be highly stressful. Thus, concomitant with an emphasis on self-mapping, is a widespread and still growing use of stress-management programs in such organisations.

THE GENDER ISSUE

Current management literature is characterised by a vigorous debate on similarities and differences in the managerial styles and competencies of men and women. Much of this debate is structured within the context of Third Blueprint complex hierarchical organisations. The advent of Fourth Blueprint organisations has not made that debate any easier—in fact, it has added considerable to its complexity.

The debate is indeed a complex one. There is a strong stream of evidence and opinion that suggests that the notion that there are real differences between the managerial and leadership behaviours of the two genders is a 'myth' (Statham, 1987; Rizzo and Mendez, 1988). If this were so, then both genders would be equally challenged by the movement towards collaborative individualism. But, as Shakeshaft (1987) points out, much of this research is androcentric. It views women from a male point of view, within a male context using male theoretical structures. Shakeshaft and others suggest that there are real differences between men and women in their managerial attitudes, styles and behaviour (Shakeshaft, 1987; Chusmir, 1985; Eisenstein, 1985; Marshall, 1987). Shakeshaft, for example, argues that women in educational administration:

- are more likely than male administrators to use an informal style with teachers and others;
- communicate differently from male administrators as they use more expressions of uncertainty, hypercorrect grammar, and give more justification for statements;
- listen more, while men interrupt more often;
- are more democratic and participatory, while men make final decisions and take action without involving others;
- use power tactics such as coalition, co-option and personality;'
- are more likely to withdraw from conflict or use collaborative strategies, whereas males use authoritative responses. (Shakeshaft, 1987, cited in Ehrich and Limerick, 1989)

Such a blend of consensual and relational skills and orientations seasoned by a readiness to use political power tactics is what collaborative individualism is all about. This is perhaps what Rogers has in mind when she suggests that the male mechanistic world of control and objectivity would be replaced by a female world view. She suggests that the three new leadership concepts of transformative leadership, vision and empowerment all embrace the values of the female ethos (Rogers, 1988). Loden (1985), focusing on women's creativity, concern for people, interpersonal skills and intuitive management, voices similar sentiments:

> In some respects, it seems that women managers may be better prepared to cope with the challenges of the future than many traditional leaders who succeeded in the past. (cited in Ehrich and Limerick, 1989: 4)

Therefore, says Peters, 'Gone are the days of women succeeding by learning to play men's games. Instead the time has come for men on the move to learn to play women's games' (Peters, 1990: 142)

The picture, however, is not quite as easy to interpret as that. First, Third Blueprint male-oriented power structures still pervade industry. For example, Blackmore (1987) argues that the traditional masculinist model of leadership stresses power, individualism and hierarchy. Eriksen (1985), too, notes that independence is typically thought of as a masculine characteristic. Therefore discrimination against women still persists: 'It is distressing but true that male resistance to women's advancement persists as the single most difficult challenge of the late twentieth century' (Raynolds,

1987: 268). For this reason, women have been turning away from formal organisations by the droves, and creating their own small businesses. They are projected to own 50 per cent of all small businesses in the US by the turn of the century (Raynolds, 1987).

But even if hierarchies disappear in favour of networks, flat structures and collaborative individualism, there will inevitably still be pockets of discrimination and even mass discrimination. The problems of women and minority groups will not disappear. While collaborative individualism de-emphasises the importance of the hierarchy it raises a different power problem. It is a system that depends on the empowerment of the individual, for without such empowerment individuals cannot participate autonomously and proactively in the system. In a society that is characterised by systematic discrimination on a gender basis, individualism can be extremely problematic, for it may leave women (and other minority power groups) exposed.

Collaborative individualism does not assert hierarchical power, but equally it does not solve the problem of power-balancing, either. Staples makes this point brilliantly:

> Individual empowerment is not now, and never will be, the salvation of powerless groups. To attain power equality, power relations between 'have', 'have-a-littles', and 'have-nots' must be transformed. This requires a change in the structure of power. (Staples, 1990: 37)

This issue of power balancing might seem a far cry from the concerns of the manager. But managers are deeply involved in problems such as equity, equal employment opportunity, union relationships, freedom of information, anti-discrimination, diversity management and the like on a day-to-day basis. Collaborative individualism will affect these issues, and management needs to prepare itself for these effects. The problem is therefore examined more fully in the final chapter.

COLLABORATIVE INDIVIDUALISM IN ACTION

The example of Geldof is a case of collaborative individualism in action.

Geldof: The collaborative individual

Collaborative individualism, reflected in words such as autonomy, creativity, politicisation and the like, is a set of prescriptive ideals. It is a set of qualities and competencies that strategic managers would like to see in others in the organisation if their network organisations are to work effectively. They are clearly idealisations, and cannot be achieved by any individual in practice. This does not reduce their impact on the functioning of network organisations; a Utopian ideal can guide behaviour if people find it persuasive.

Like all ideals, it is also partly descriptive. It is instructive to see it reflected in part in the functioning of a collaborative individual like Bob Geldof. The list of characteristics given above is very close to those of Geldof: individualistic,

yet collaborative; proactive, internally driven, yet with rugged political skills. He recounts a meeting with Mother Theresa (another quintessential collaborative individual) in Africa:

> . . . there was a certainty of purpose which left little patience. But she was totally selfless; every moment her aim seemed to be, how can I use this or that situation to help others . . . She held my hand as she left and said, 'Remember this. I can do something that you can's do and you can do something that I can't do. But we both have to do it.' (Geldof, 1986: 302)

And Geldof did. His vision was clear. When asked by his friend Harvey why he was trying to organise something as impossible as a global telethon, he replied simply, 'Because people are dying, Harvey' (Geldof, 1986: 331).

Geldof's intuitive, empathetic skills were as sharply tuned as his holistic understanding of his mission. For example, he sensed the danger of diluting the vision and mission of Live Aid when the press pushed him to make a personal trip to Ethiopia:

> I knew why. It would be good story: the pop star and the starving child in the same photograph. That is why I had no intention of going. 'It is not necessary. I don't need to go there to see it. I've seen it already on television. There are experts to help decide how best to spend the money. They don't need a half-assed pop singer. Can't you see how distasteful that would be?' But taste never having been one of the strong points of the British popular press, the point seemed to elude them. (Geldof, 1986: 239)

In the end, empathy was balanced by a willingness to use political guile or even force where necessary:

> I capitulated . . . before we went I talked to the papers and TV stations concerned. I said there must be no pictures of me with starving children. They said I was being unreasonable. I said, 'Fine. I have to go. I have no money myself. I cannot spend Band Aid money, but I will get there and you won't be with me' . . . They finally agreed and they still paid my bills. (Geldof, 1986: 295)

His toughness was legendary. For example, he won a battle with the British government, which wanted to have tax deducted from his Band Aid record sales, by taking the matter into the public arena. And when a catering firm at his charity concert wanted to extract a profit, he threatened to tell everyone to pack their own meals and boycott the firm.

Geldof demonstrates elegantly the key tenet of collaborative individualism: that pragmatic political skills and intuitive, empathetic capacity are not irreconcilable. He has both. He recalls his reaction to first seeing the dying children of Ethiopia: 'The eyes were looking at me. I began to cry. I was angry. Crying was useless and a waste of energy' (Geldof, 1986: 308). He used both political skills and empathy to transform the efforts of others. His actions were brilliant, creative, quirky—and entirely intuitive:

> But it was different. It was extraordinary. I am too close to it now to stand back and see it in all its unlikely power and glory, but in future years I know I

> will wonder how the hell it was possible and what it was the enabled me to do it. I never once stopped to consider what happened next. I acted intuitively all the time. (Geldof, 1986: 442)

And finally, he found the experience totally stressful and exhausting.   He wrote shortly after Live Aid was over:

> I am exhausted now, as I have been for the past seventeen months . . . But I am satisfied I have literally done as much as I am capable of doing, and I will always rail against those things I abhor. I will always try to avoid the cant and hypocrisy I loathe so much. I will continue being an 'awkward bugger'. (Geldof, 1986: 443-3)

It is difficult not to idealise someone as socially contributive as Geldof. Geldof himself has a considerable degree of unblinkered self-insight. As Hunter Davies noted in the Standard, his autobiography is 'sheer Geldof, direct, loudmouthed, honest, button-holing, obscene, compassionate, compelling' (Geldof, 1986). And so, paradoxically, while we use Geldof as a model for collaborative individualism, he also illustrates and asserts the gap between the actuality and the ideal.

There is an essential fit between these characteristics and the task that confronted Geldof. The 'organisation' he brought together in Live Aid was loosely coupled in the extreme. It consisted of mature proactive individuals, many of them stars, with the potential for collaboration. It took another collaborative individual, Geldof, to transform this aggregate into a collaborative enterprise. Loosely coupled network organisations could not operate without proactive, collaborative individuals: the latter need the freedom offered by loose coupling.

Geldof has been used as an exemplar of collaborative individualism. We could easily have chosen other managers whose task it is to build network organisations that deal with discontinuous change. The political, intuitive skills of the two World Expo architects of the 1980s, Pattison in Vancouver and Edwards in Brisbane, for example, are just as legendary.

What this portrait does do, however, is highlight the gap between the collaborative individual and the good citizen of the Third Blueprint organisation. How is this gap to be closed?

DEVELOPING THE COLLABORATIVE INDIVIDUAL

Discontinuous change can be an alienating experience for the good corporate citizen for it takes away the predictable structures and processes that have become part and parcel of their self-definition. Western society cannot, from an ethical, social or economic point of view, exclude or drive an entire cohort from the workforce. A move towards Fourth Blueprint organisations entails the problem of helping many to come to terms with a new world view and to develop the skills to be effective in a

different organisational milieu. It is tempting to solve this problem by focusing ion the corporate citizen and 'changing' him or her. That would miss the point entirely, for it is the organisational system as a whole and the human resource management system within it that must change.

A program that successfully moves all its participants to share a new structure, a new vision and a new culture is essentially a quantum, transformational, strategic change program (cf. Dunphy and Stace, 1988; Kilmann et al., 1985; Doz and Prahalad, 1988). Such change processes are discussed in Chapter 7. It is worth focusing for the moment on changes to human resource management processes, which are more directly aimed at developing some of the key competencies of collaborative individualism.

Transfer responsibility for career path planning

A fundamental step is to pass responsibility for career planning back to the individual. This involves the removal of secrecy in career path planning, asserting the legitimacy of career paths that straddle the organisation and other possible employers, focusing on the career assets of the individual as an end in itself, and relating organisational opportunities to the plans of the individual. This is close to what Schein calls the 'internal career' (Schein, 1990).

The likely outcome of such activity is to assist the individual to construct not a linear role-related career path, but what Driver (1985) calls a 'spiralling' career path, which consists of a combination of vertical and lateral career moves. Indeed, it is likely to have an even more profound impact on the individual. It will enable them to move away from the conventional hierarchical industrial model of 'career' as the addition of more responsibilities within a system, to a more holistic model of career as a path in the individual's life (Connell, 1985: 157).

There is some evidence that it may be particularly important for women managers to engage in clear career planning in order to provide enough momentum to break through discriminatory systems (Hodgson, 1985). Overall, it is the act of taking responsibility for one's own development in terms of one's own identity that helps break the bond between the individual and the structure and that enables the individual to move into more network relationships.

Develop contracts with employees through objectives negotiation

Related to the concept of transferring the responsibility for career management to the individual is the technique of forming shorter term career contracts (not to be confused with employment contracts) with the individual. Rather than engaging in management by objectives (setting organisational objectives for the individual), human resource managers can overtly compare the objectives of the individual with those of the organisation and negotiate a contract of activities and mutual objectives

that satisfy both. It is useful to set time horizons and sunset clauses on each contract and to negotiate times for the re-evaluation and re-negotiation of each contract.

It is significant that the three relocation agencies in our Canadian study of redundant managers reported that those who were most successful in handling their redundancies were those who were accustomed, in their life span, to contracting their activities out to others. They were more autonomous and more ready to form partnerships with others. Neuman, Vice President of the Bechtel group, makes this point quite clearly:

> . . . the companies that will be more than mere survivors will have to develop a true partnership with their employees with mutual goals and objectives, shared responsibility for career and skill development and mutual confidence and respect. (Wagel and Levine, 1989: 27)

Help employees to map their assets

As Tucker argues, one of the first steps in dealing with discontinuity ('when the rules of the game change') is to:

> Start by incorporating yourself mentally. Incorporating yourself mentally requires you to begin thinking of yourself as 'You, Inc.', a company with one employee: you. (Tucker, 1987: 58)

Tucker's article was so relevant to the self-mapping, self-evaluating process that it was used widely by the Canadian agencies to help the unemployed 50-year-olds to adjust to the new world view. But that is too late. What is required is assistance to all employees in mapping, evaluating and developing their career assets.

The process is mutually advantageous to the organisation because it gives human resource management a better overview of the current and potential resources available within the organisation and facilitates clearer placement expectations on the part of both the individual and the organisation.

Help employees to map their intuitive and empathetic capacities

The use of scales such as the Myers—Briggs in training and counselling programs does help to legitimate right-brain capacities. More important, however, is a more systematic and consistent use of action learning as a primary training and development strategy. It promotes creativity and experimentation. More than that, it promotes the very paradigm of collaborative individualism. It places the onus for proactive intervention squarely on the shoulders of the individual, but at the same time places each individual in a collaborative learning arena. Finally, its focus on process skills helps the individual to get feedback on self-in-process and to develop empathetic capacities.

Help employees to develop marketing and negotiating skills

The first thing that corporate citizens have to do in starting again after redundancy or in confronting a change towards more disco9ntinuous systems is to learn to 'market' themselves. In terms of their previous role stability and loyalty, they tend to find the entire process difficult and distasteful, for they feel that the organisation has reneged on its reciprocal commitments to them.

For those who find themselves in the hands of outplacement firms, exposure to self-marketing skills comes too late. The development of an awareness of the broader labour market within and without the firm, training in career strategy formulation and training in the presentation of self. An essential part of marketing is networking, and it may be particularly important for women to expand their networking activities (Gumprecht, 1985; Hodgson, 1985).

Finally, marketing skills and negotiating skills go hand in hand, for the individual needs to market to find appropriate contracts, and negotiate to arrive at equitable contracts. Therefore part of the ongoing program of management development must include a focus on both sets of skills.

It may be necessary to come to terms with the fact that, as people become more confident of their own abilities and their capacity to exploit them, the organisation may have to help the individual to move outside the organisation. Delbecq and Weiss report that much of the culture of Silicon Valley springs from this recognition:

> To be sure, as much as possible, the executives would like people to find opportunities for entrepreneurship inside their company. But a certain percentage of time they realise it is not possible and they see part of their obligation to assist the continuous spin-off process that has created a unique and prolific genealogy in Silicon Valley. (Delbecq and Weiss, 1988: 37)

Open up the information system

Instead of keeping the implications of organisational changes and expansion to themselves and making unilateral placement decisions, organisations need to learn to open up information on the job market within the organisation. Individuals who are managing their own careers can then plan to take advantage of opportunities that arise. Such information should cover the range of the business units in larger organisations, and might even be extended to information on other organisations with which the firm is establishing long-term alliances. Japanese organisations are already promoting intercompany human resources leasing and transfer through regional company groupings called *igyoshu koryu* (Mroczkowski and Hanaoka, 1989: 51)

Manage by empowerment

At the heart of all of these ways of developing collaborative individualism is the philosophy of empowerment. As Mills (cited in Pickett, 1992: 10) argues: 'Clusters

[networks] make possible the full empowerment of people.' Conger's definition of empowerment is a good one:

> We can think of empowerment as the act of strengthening an individual's beliefs in his or her sense of effectiveness. In essence, then, empowerment is simply a set of external actions: it is a process of changing the internal beliefs of people. (Conger, 1989: 18)

Self-mapping, career-path transfer, contract formation and the like are some of the external actions that help the individual achieve a sense of effectiveness. But what gives them force and guides managerial behaviour is a commitment to the importance of individual autonomy and the power to exercise it on behalf of the organisation. Some managers and organisations have embraced this view. Doyle, GE's senior vice president of external and industrial relations, has done exactly that:

> People-power will be a source of corporate opportunity to the extent that it compels us to liberate employees to do only the important work by eliminating the unimportant work. We have begun to recognize that at GE, where we are encouraging our diverse business cultures to be guided by what we call 'speed, simplicity and self-confidence'. (Doyle, 1990: 38)

Yet many managers, says Tom Brown of *Industry Week*, are 'fearful of empowerment'. Will it not flatten managerial ranks, rob managers of power and throw the organisation into decision-making turmoil? Such reactions can be associated with feelings of threat and resentment (Manz et al., 1990). These views and feelings, of course, are lodged in that old enemy, the zero-sum model of power: if you get some, I have less.

Just as networks and alliances are built on strengths, not weaknesses, so the philosophy of empowerment is one of accumulative power—it implies more power to all. Collaborative individualism would be impossible without it. Notes Brown:

> It's not an easy process . . . Empowerment can be a process of 'plugging in' the entire organisation to the goal of getting—or staying—ahead. Properly managed, it can be electrifying. (Brown, 1990: 12)

Improperly managed, empowerment programs can actually be harmful (Matthes, 1992). Empowerment requires the full use of Fourth Blueprint management technology.

Confront diversity and achieve differentiation

Despite the fact that the dominant coalition in any organisation may orchestrate a shift from a competitive to an entrepreneurial culture such transformations cannot be treated as an all or nothing affair. Most organisations are developing dual structures and cultures, comprising both cultures (Ansoff, 1988). Even those engaged in networking arrangements develop a more stable core around which networks revolve.

While the overall emphasis is turning from citizenship to entrepreneurial cultures, there will continue to be parts of organisational systems in which stability is critical to

effectiveness and where citizenship orientations are more functional. Organisations need to protect these areas from being colonised by the competing world view.

Perhaps one of the most fundamental forms of differentiation is between higher and lower participants. Those in the higher managerial ranks are experiencing the strongest pressures towards the development of the kinds of competencies discussed above. Those further down the organisation, especially those in the core units, may find themselves relatively more protected from the winds of change. But they are unlikely to escape them entirely. As their organisations move into new technologies, into more network arrangements and into global markets they too will find themselves confronting situations for which their past has not prepared them. As that happens, they will be drawn more and more into either entering or interacting with the world of collaborative individualism.

A CONTINUING BATTLE

Discontinuous change, network organisations and collaborative individualism are tightly interwoven. The degree of discontinuity is increasing in the environment, and no organisation will remain untouched by it. We are therefore witnessing the progressive demise of organisation man and woman—of the good organisational citizen, or the good soldier. In this era of a battle for power between the individual and institutions, collaborative individuals are slowly winning. They won outside the Berlin Wall and the Moscow White House and they are slowly winning inside the everyday organisations of the West. The victory is not assured and there may be many setbacks.

But there is much that is positive in what has been won. We are seeing the end of the 'good corporate citizen', but not the end of citizenship. Citizenship, of organisations or of society, has been redefined in terms of a clear recognition and negotiation of reciprocal rights and obligations between the individual and the institution.

But this new dispensation does bring with it new and unpredicted challenges. It is certainly problematic for the good soldiers of our current organisations. But it is also problematic for the new collaborative individuals. Both groups are in uncharted waters and both will contribute to our emergent organisational systems over the next few decades. That is the nature of discontinuity.