

Innovation in children's services and child protection

examples of implementation strategies

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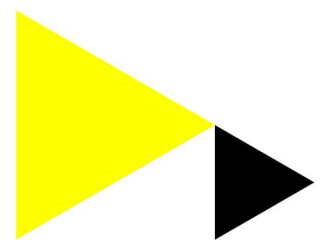
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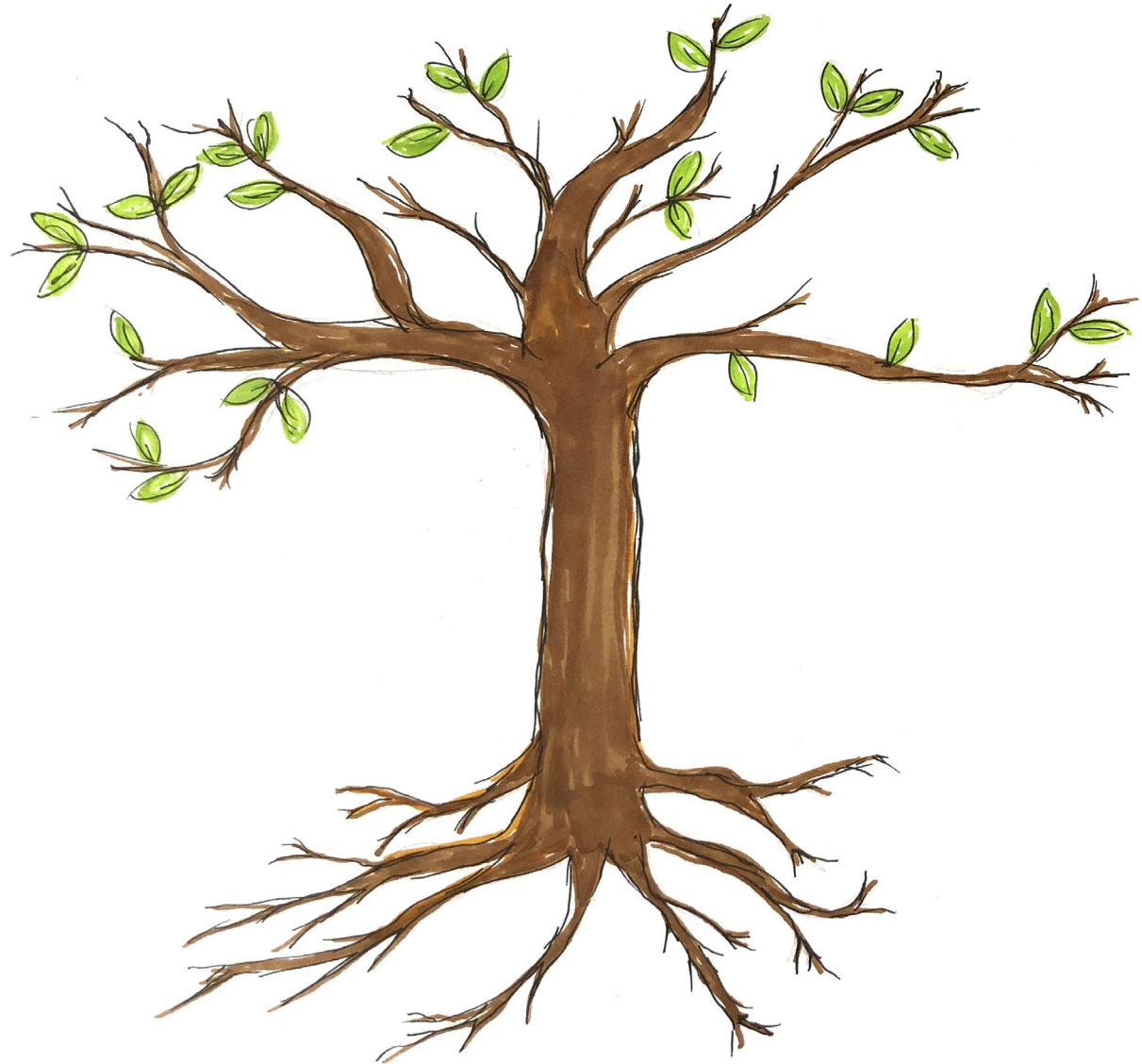
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Innovation in children's services and child protection

Examples of implementation strategies



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Implementing a new approach?

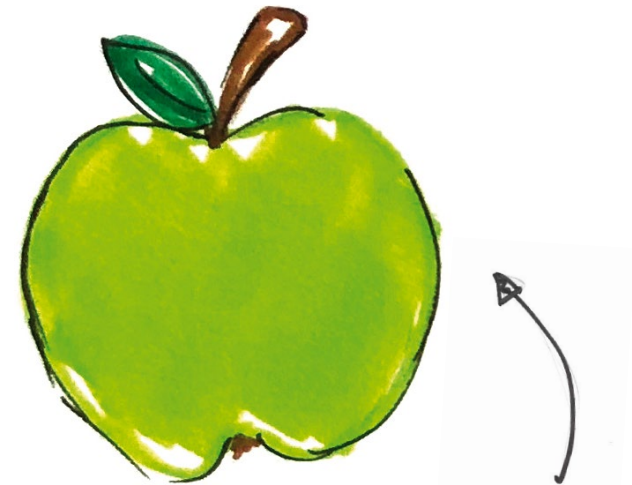
Developments in the field of children's services and child protection require organizations to constantly adapt. New ways of funding, new target groups, advancing knowledge on effective methods, new tools: how do you adapt your organization to these?

Working from 'the purpose'

The core question is: why does our organization exist? What is the goal of our work? What is the purpose? How do parents, children and youths benefit from this?

In order for an organization to start working from their purpose, drastic and extensive changes may be required. This document addresses the steps necessary to achieve this, and gives examples of implementation strategies that have been used, and are in use, by Child protection services Amsterdam to work with intensive family case management.

Smaller changes, such as the implementation of a specific risk assessment tool in conversations with parents and children, or working with a new registration system, all contribute to working from the purpose. For these changes, the various steps and issues addressed in this document are also of importance.

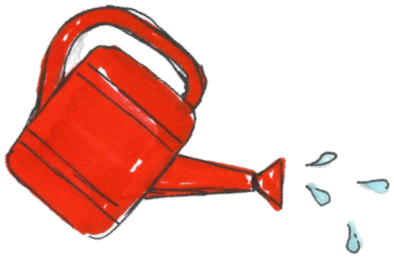


**Make sure the
purpose
always takes
center stage.**

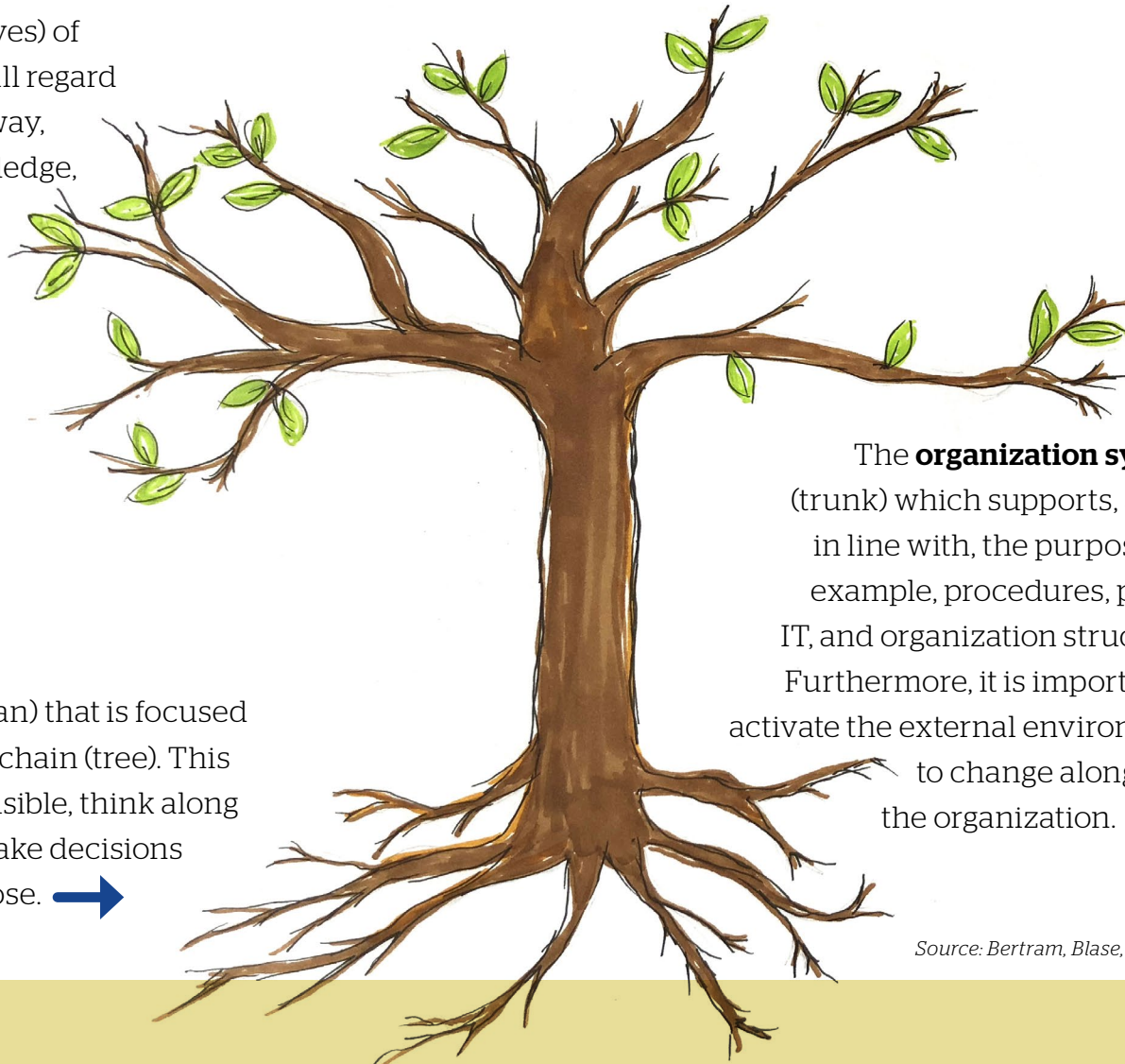
1. Three dimensions

Implementing a new approach for the organization: what to bear in mind?

The **competencies** (leaves) of the employees. They will regard the work in a different way, and develop new knowledge, attitudes, and skills; always working from the purpose. →



Leadership (watering can) that is focused on nurturing the entire chain (tree). This requires leaders to be visible, think along with employees, and make decisions working from the purpose. →



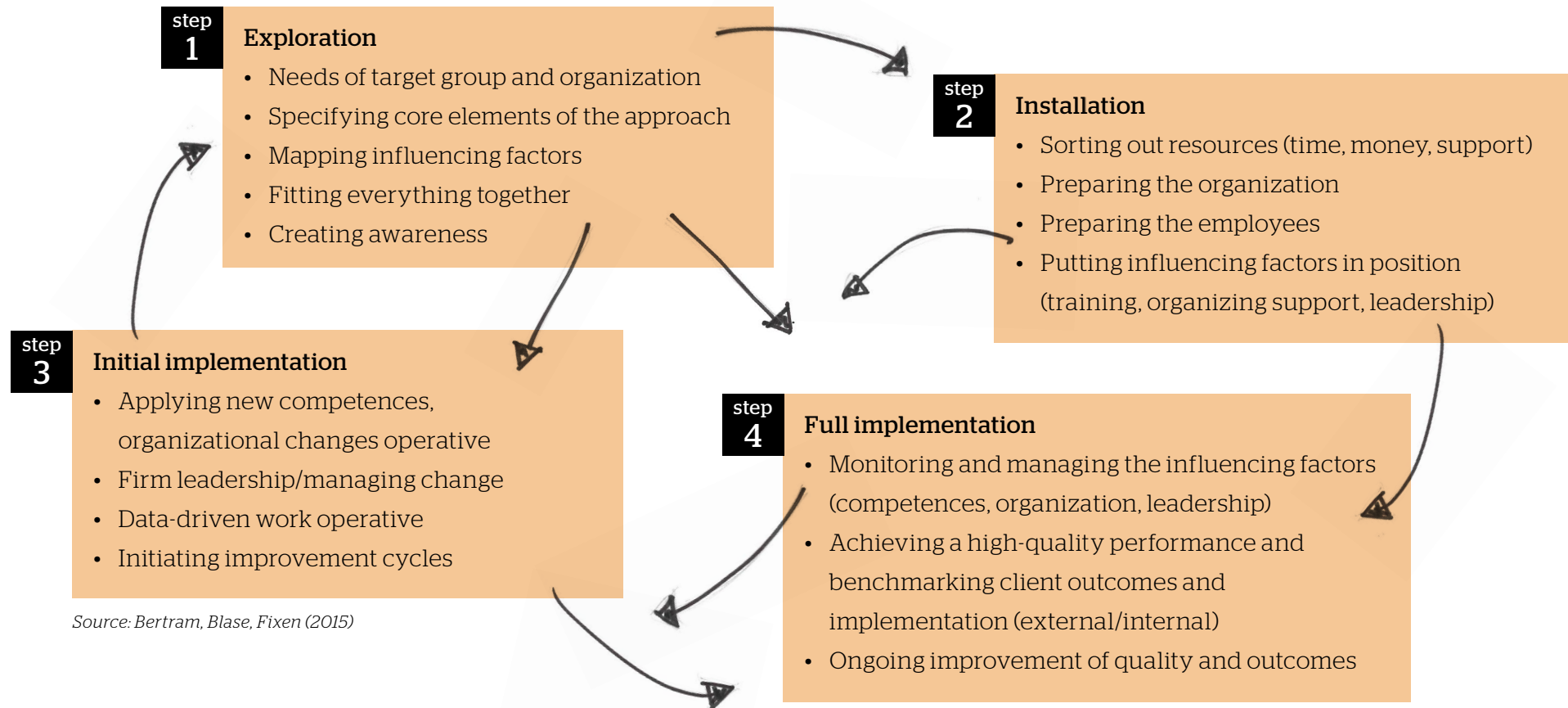
The **organization system** (trunk) which supports, and is in line with, the purpose (for example, procedures, policy, IT, and organization structure). Furthermore, it is important to activate the external environment to change along with the organization. →

Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)

These three components all add to the culture (**roots**) of the organization. Values, such as 'continuous learning' and 'calling each other to account' are experienced and nurtured. The culture stems from the purpose, and because the three components are constantly developing the roots grow deeper, creating a secure base and anchoring for the organization.

Implementation is a process, not an event

Implementing a new approach is a process that takes 2 to 4 years, in which different phases can be distinguished. In reality, these phases don't neatly follow one after the other. Circumstances within and surrounding the organization can create the need to repeat steps from earlier phases.



Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)

Exploration phase

Creating a match between the organization's goals for their target group ('the purpose'), their approach (the model), and the available resources within and surrounding the organization. How? Create an overview of potential barriers for the application/implementation of the programme: means, personnel, client flow, and environment. What do you need to achieve the desired outcome and increase awareness amongst employees of the organization's 'purpose'? Conducting small pilots helps. The result is a dual definition of the outcome:

- What is our goal for the target group ('the purpose'): population outcome.
- Subsequently, what is our goal for the organization: organization outcome.



→ In practice

In 2011 Child protection services Amsterdam gave a select group of enthusiastic staff ('the main group') the task of re-designing the workflow, in order to realize the organization's purpose. They approached this using the Vanguard method of Check - Plan - Do. During the 'check' phase, they investigated all operational processes to see whether or not they were valuable in realizing the purpose "every child safe, forever" (the population outcome). Second, the work flow was re-designed (starting from the purpose) using a previously formulated pedagogical vision and a system-oriented approach as a basis. For the 'do' phase, the organization outcome was formulated as follows: Every activity must contribute to the purpose. We only deliver "value work"!

SPEAKING

Director, Child protection services Amsterdam



→ You can adapt the subtitles in YouTube to your language of choice

Installation

Systematically and consistently checking the three sets of factors that influence the implementation of the new approach: the organization system (trunk), the employee competences (leaves), the (required) leadership (watering can). Together, these shape the culture (roots).

This requires resources: to develop the employees' competences, to adapt the organization, and to set up support- and data systems. Implementing a new approach in a pre-existing infrastructure is doomed to fail. A new approach requires innovation / adaptations for all three components: organization, competences, and leadership. The goal: achieving results with clients (the purpose).

→ In practice

In 2011-2013 the vanguard group of Child protection services Amsterdam analyzed the old workflow with all the teams (divided into cohorts). This was done by looking at which aspects were of value to the purpose of "every child safe, forever", and which weren't. This process was essential because everyone now fully realized that the new value work was necessary to achieve the desired outcome. After this realization the main group further trained the teams in the value work, with each team going through the same process.

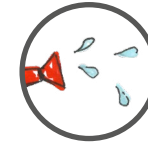
Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)



The organization system
(trunk)



The employee competences
(leaves)



The (required) leadership
(watering can)



Together, these shape
the culture **(roots)**



Initial implementation

Successful implementation requires changes in organization structures and employee competences, and with that, changes in the culture of the organization. New programmes survive only if they are capable of learning from the challenges that follow from implementation. This requires a systemic and system-oriented approach instead of looking for technical solutions for isolated problems.

In this phase, all kinds of unexpected inhibitory factors will emerge. Professionals will be unsure of their roles, responsibilities, and actions. Team leaders or supporting staff who initially show enthusiasm, may hesitate to act in the agreed upon manner because 'their people' will revolt. This is normal behaviour which requires leadership that normalizes these challenges and provides intensive coaching. It also requires support from employees applying the new working method, and data-driven work.



→ In practice

An example of leadership in Child protection services Amsterdam is the biweekly meeting for all team leaders and a board member concerning the progress, experiences, and any issues that need solving. "I remember returning from those meetings depressed, because you'd think: 'My team and I are doing so well!' And then you'd realize... ooh, so much more needs to get done! But it does teach you to always take that next step, and never settle for good enough."

Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)

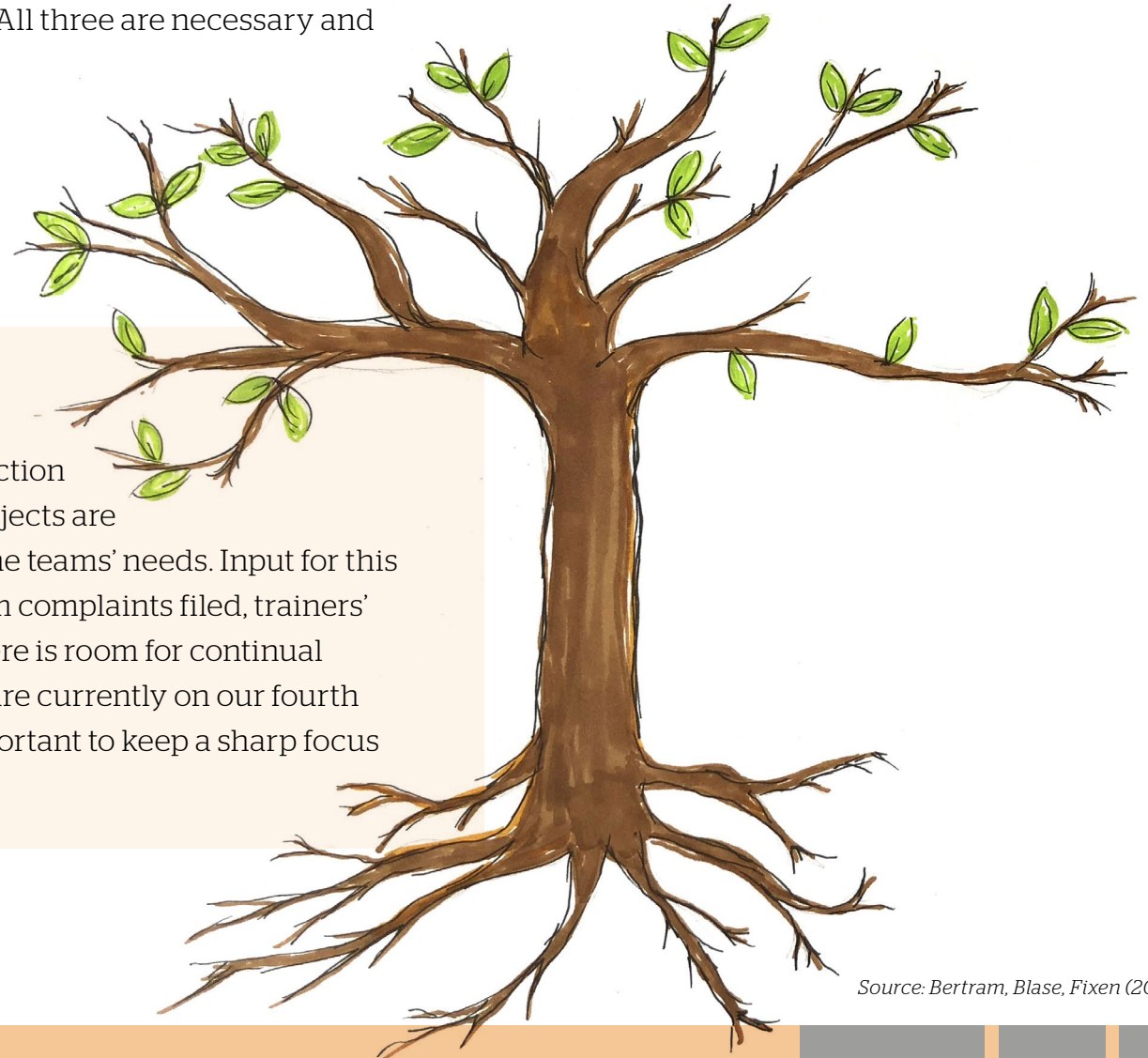
Full implementation

This phase is complete when employees routinely perform the new working method to a satisfactory quality level. This can't be accomplished without paying continuous attention to competences, organization, and leadership. All three are necessary and need permanent attention.

The amount of time needed to reach this stage varies between different programmes and organizations.

→ In practice

In this day and age, working with intensive family case management is common practice in Child protection services Amsterdam. Research- and development projects are available and trainings are constantly adapted to fit the teams' needs. Input for this comes from satisfaction surveys amongst clients, from complaints filed, trainers' experiences, team desires, et cetera. Furthermore, there is room for continual development of team support, audits, and so on. "We are currently on our fourth 'enroll,' adjustments still need to be made, and it's important to keep a sharp focus on the purpose."



Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)

3. Awareness

The challenge

When going through the previously described phases it is crucial to develop an organization-wide awareness of the need for change. This awareness can be created in all sorts of ways, but reflection is always key: on the workflow, the design of the organization, the (quality of) the execution, the training and support of employees, and the client outcomes. Awareness and reflection on the work help shape a culture within the organization of being open and vulnerable, and learning together. This culture will further aid the process of continually adapting the organization and the system in order to realize 'the purpose'.

The key is employee awareness of the need for behavioural change. The exact nature of this change depends on the purpose of the organization. Awareness does not stem from top-down statements that things must change; it comes from working bottom-up and ensuring that all employees feel, and keep feeling, the need for change for themselves. In other words: 'enroll' the (need for) change step-by-step, instead of imposing it top-down.

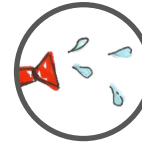
Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)



The organization system
(trunk)



The employee competences
(leaves)



The (required) leadership
(watering can)



Together, these shape the culture
(roots)

Do's & Don'ts



- Bottom-up approach (enroll).
- Let employees feel the need for change.
- Create a safe learning environment.



- Top-down approach (unroll)
- Focus on the approach
- Give insufficient time

Examples of creating awareness within Child protection services

- ▶ In Child protection services Amsterdam, the Vanguard method was used to start creating awareness within the organization. This method follows the principle of Check-Plan-Do: understanding the current situation, envisioning the ideal situation, and normalizing that situation. The 'Check' phase helps clarify which processes, rules, and protocols actually contribute to the purpose of the organization, and which do not.
- ▶ Based on these outcomes, Child protection services Amsterdam asked a small group (the aforementioned main group) to develop a new work process ('Plan'). More often than not this is an arduous and painful process, because drastic choices have to be made and professionals have to let go of familiar ways of working.
- ▶ To guarantee the actual implementation of the working method (the 'Do' step, the new normal) Child protection services Amsterdam followed an 'enroll' strategy, in which every team got time to walk through the 'Check' phase and (led by the main group) make choices for a new work process ('Plan'). Families in their care were temporarily assigned to other professionals.
- ▶ After the 'enroll' there was room for continuous reflection and learning. This eventually creates a need to re-design the new working method. Some assumptions or techniques will turn out not to be the most useful. The Check-Plan-Do steps are repeated and the new working method is examined once more.

“We discovered that in 53 out of 60 files, Child protection services had not improved the families’ situation, or had even worsened it.

This was a tough conclusion to draw and everyone struggled with it, because in the end we were all working very hard.

We developed a new working method, but then we still had to get our 400 colleagues on board. It’s not something you can teach someone to do.

It’s something you have to experience for yourself. We had to give everyone the experience we’d had during our investigation of the old work flow.”

(Advisor Child protection services Amsterdam)

SPEAKING

Advisor Child
protection services
Amsterdam

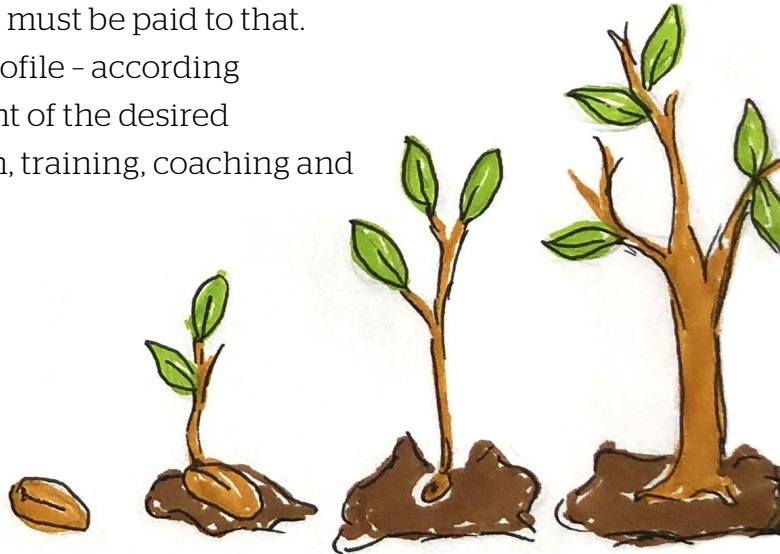


4. Competencies

A new approach is always exciting. Professionals must let go of their trusted working methods. Methods they feel connected to and that give them a sense of security. More often than not it's not immediately clear what's expected of them, and what knowledge and skills they will need. Some employees will resist the change and attention must be paid to that. Furthermore, not everyone will fit in with the new profile - according to themselves or the organization. In the development of the desired competencies, four elements are important: selection, training, coaching and monitoring.

How do you make sure the right people are involved in a process of change and develop the right competences?

How do you make sure employees keep certain skills and knowledge, and continually reflect starting from the daily working practice?



The 4 components:

Selection →

Training →

Coaching →

Monitoring →

Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)

Selecting the right people

The challenge

An important question when implementing a new approach has to do with the people currently working for the organization: are they the right people to help carry these changes through? Although this can be a confronting question (continuing with current employees seems easier) it's essential to devote time and attention to it. Employees must possess the right competencies, attitude, and motivation for the new working method. This usually means that a selection must be made.

Selection involves both choosing people who fit well with the new working method, and helping those who can't stay (or don't wish to) find a different position. The question is: how to approach this? Where to begin?

Do's & Don'ts



- Select people who are excited about the change and can convey this excitement to others.
- Continually convey the vision (the purpose) so more and more people will be convinced of the need for change.



- Hold onto people who do not feel committed, for fear of costs or an exodus. Dare to make changes!



Examples of selection within Child protection services

▶ The startup phase

Child protection services Amsterdam started by forming the 'main group': a group of people who go through the process of change before everyone else and who serve as trailblazers (pioneers) and mentors for the others. It's important for such a group to select highly motivated employees who fully embrace the change and are capable of motivating others.

▶ Current employees

All team managers at Child protection services Amsterdam talked with all employees in their team. It quickly became clear that - in order to prevent resistance and negative energy - it is better to let unmotivated people go and help them choose a new position.

▶ New employees

With a new approach the employee competence profile also changes. Child protection services Amsterdam had extensive and thorough talks with all new employees: are their competencies (knowledge, skills, attitude) and expectations compatible with the new working method?

To facilitate the transformation of Child protection services we first implemented competence management. Competence management is a method of evaluating employees.

The core question was: 'Are you capable of doing the work?' The second question was: 'Are you willing?' And some people weren't. The team managers had thorough conversations about this; also with the employees whom we felt should not continue with this new work.

The group that did not want, or was unable, to continue formed a support team for two years, and was given time and support to find a new place that was a better fit for them.

(Knowledge ambassador Child protection services Amsterdam)

SPEAKING

Knowledge ambassador
Child protection
services Amsterdam



The challenge

When implementing a new approach it is vital that everyone is a) aware of the need for and direction of the new approach, b) is excited for the new approach and personally feels the need for change, and c) is able to master the new approach.

So the question is: how should training take shape?



Do's & Don'ts

- ✓
 - Utilize the main group to get employees excited and to help them experience the need for this new approach.
 - Make a core group of trainers (for example, in an internal training office) responsible for training employees.
 - Organize informal meetings where employees (of all levels) can share experiences and learn from one another.
 - Provide adequate time between trainings so the approach can be experienced in practice, and organize support in the workplace (a helpdesk, amongst other things).
 - Use internal media, such as intranet, so spread knowledge and experiences throughout the organization.
- ✗
 - Continue with the same case load. Make sure employees feel enough space to actually put the new working method into practice.

Examples of training within Child protection services

- ▶ Training means: supporting employees in their acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Knowledge is important, but learning through experience must be central.
- ▶ Child protection services Amsterdam ensured that every employee was informed of the change at all times by disseminating information widely. The choice was made to work with cohorts: employees from later cohorts could already join in and experience the upcoming changes.
- ▶ All teams were excited for the new working method because they experienced the need for the new approach themselves. Child protection services Amsterdam achieved this by letting each team (led by the main group) analyze the current workflow and experience for themselves the need for 'value work' (organization outcome).
- ▶ To master a new approach, several days of training are often needed. These trainings should take place at different moments in time so that employees can learn through experience. Create a helpdesk (within Child protection services Amsterdam, the main group took on this role) and make sure people actually have time to put the new working methods into practice (Child protection services Amsterdam utilized a separate support team for this).

If you want to make radical changes as an organization it's important to realize that employees need support to learn a new approach. You have to give them space to put their learnings into practice, and the only way to do that is by (temporarily) lowering their work load. Exchanging experiences on the new working method is also vital, as is a continual adaptation of the available training. Learning never stops!

(Trainings team manager,
Child protection services Amsterdam)

SPEAKING

Trainings team
manager, Child
protection services
Amsterdam



The challenge

It is important that everyone keeps working from 'the purpose', and keeps applying the new working methods in the right manner. This is only possible if employees keep learning and keep asking (themselves) if the work they're doing is contributing to the purpose. How do you ensure this happens?

MANUAL

Selecting, training, and supporting supervisors



MANUAL

Supervision with video recordings and role-playing



Do's & Don'ts



- Structure team meetings around the concept of continuous learning through experience, with supervision, specific case discussions, and attention for team issues / team development.
- Also organize support for the supporting staff.
- Utilize a variety of active working methods to bring to light learning opportunities for employees.
- Build in reflection opportunities and feedback loops at every organizational level.



- Give one person (for example, the team leader) full responsibility for learning and development within teams; this responsibility is shared by all team members.
- Focus on training. The focus should be on the 'journey of discovery': learning through experience and reflection.

Examples of coaching within Child protection services

▶ Structural support in the primary process is necessary to enable employees to learn in the workplace. In Child protection services Amsterdam, this was organized by incorporating weekly team sessions, consisting of three components: 1) supervision focused on applying the new working method, 2) specific case discussions based on core questions arising from the purpose, and 3) team issues and team development. For these three components to come to fruition, three different 'haulers' are needed. At Child protection services Amsterdam these are a supervisor (senior employee), a behaviour psychologist, and a team leader, each playing their own role.

▶ Joint reflection and feedback loops are also necessary on other organizational levels. Child protection services Amsterdam works and has worked with:

- Work sessions with team leaders
 - Work sessions with the main group
 - Weekly supervisions and a head supervisor
 - Video reflection on every level
 - A variety of active working methods
- For example: theatre exercises, Dynamic learning agenda, Change mapping sessions, Barometer.

TIPS FOR WORKING METHODS

Reflexive Monitoring in Action



SPEAKING

Behaviour psychologist,
Child protection
services Amsterdam



We have weekly three-hour meetings with our core team. Every employee can bring in cases so the team can collectively deliberate about the right course of action. To ensure these meetings flow well we utilize three roles: the team manager focuses on why we do what we do, the behaviour psychologist focuses on safe environments for children, and the supervisor advises employees on their course of action. It's crucial that all attendees come well-prepared. This may all sound easy, but it's not!

(Behaviour psychologist, Child protection services Amsterdam)

The challenge

In order to reflect and learn, information is necessary on how employees approach their job. The challenge is to collect and use this information in such a way that it's not about judging each other, but about stimulating and learning.

How do you bring the quality of the implementation into vision in such a way that it stimulates learning and contributes to improving the quality?

MANUAL

Developing a reflection tool



Do's & Don'ts



- Pay, and keep paying, close attention to the quality with which employees execute the (new) working method.
- Develop and use a reflection tool in supervision.
- Shape an evaluation- and review cycle around the (core) competencies necessary to carry out the working method.
- Develop internal audits, in which teams and employees have conversation on the quality of their work as a way to learn and further develop themselves.



- Use a reflection tool to assess the quality, or incorporate a reflection tool into the evaluation- and review cycle. Use a reflection tool to assess the quality of implementation for accountability purposes only. Such a tool is intended for learning, not for accountability.

Examples of monitoring within Child protection services

Monitoring is about bringing into vision the level of fidelity of the execution of the approach, and using this information for the development of employees, teams, and the organization as a whole.

▶ Reflection tool

Working with a reflection tool helps give and receive feedback on the implementation of the working method. To develop such a tool, it is necessary to determine the core elements of the method and to operationalize these in behaviour characteristics. Child protection services Amsterdam uses tools based on the fidelity tools from Functional Family Parole, the core method of intensive family case management.

▶ Internal audit

Another method includes having quality conversations with each team about how successful they are in reaching the population outcome (for Child protection services Amsterdam: “every child safe, forever”) and the organization outcome (for Child protection services: delivering value work). In what ways are they successful, and where is room for improvement? And how can the team accomplish this?

▶ Competence management

Appraisals are shaped specifically around the competence development.

We come to meetings well-prepared, using among other things the techniques we’ve been taught. The senior family manager helps us with this in the weekly case discussions. Colleagues bring in a case in the form of a written reflection (case note), an audio-, or a video recording of a conversation. Every three months an employee and I look at how they’re applying the model/techniques. Just a training is not sufficient: continuous reflection is vital.

(Senior family manager, Child protection services Amsterdam (coach))

SPEAKING

Senior family manager,
Child protection
services
Amsterdam (coach)



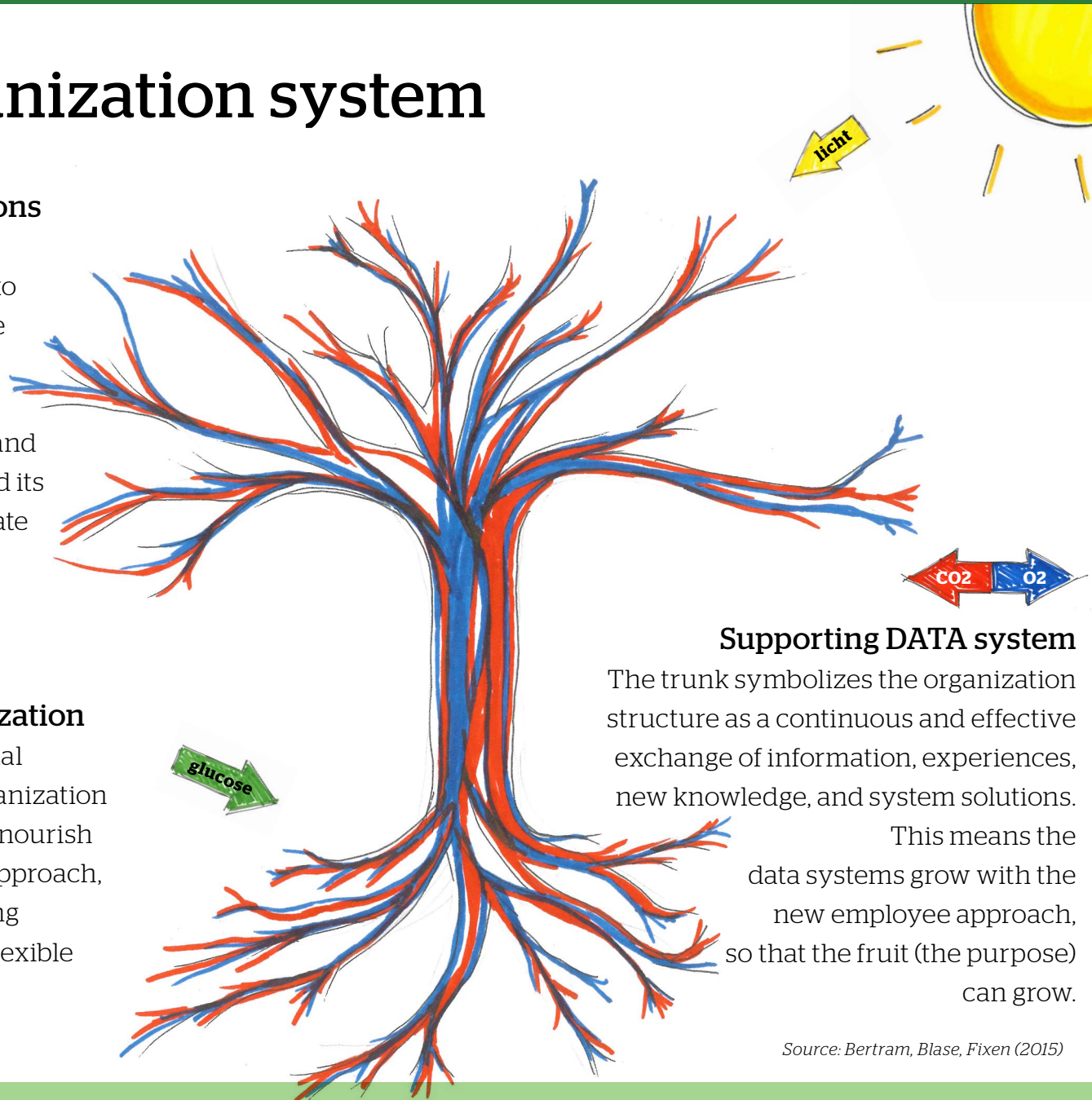
The organization system

System interventions

Activate the external environment in time to change along with the organization, so the new approach can receive enough light and the fruit can grow (and its growth will not stagnate prematurely).

Facilitating organization

Ensure that the internal environment and organization structure sufficiently nourish the employees' new approach, for example by forming new teams, creating flexible workplaces, etc.



Supporting DATA system

The trunk symbolizes the organization structure as a continuous and effective exchange of information, experiences, new knowledge, and system solutions.

This means the data systems grow with the new employee approach, so that the fruit (the purpose) can grow.

Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)

The 4 components:

external system interventions →

internal system interventions →

data-driven work →

facilitating organization →

Organization: external system interventions

The challenge

The organization operates within a system or chain of other organizations. These play a vital role in achieving the purpose or mission.

However, this system can sometimes put up barriers or operate from a different vision, making it difficult for employees to realize the purpose. For example, a child may have to wait a long time for the right therapy or care. Instead of settling for a less than perfect solution, the conversation about 'the purpose' must also be held outside of the organization, so the system will change as well. This requires system interventions.

Do's & Don'ts



- Involve external partners with upcoming changes from the start. This leads to collective learning and an unequivocal vision about the collaboration to realize the purpose.
- Have a proactive attitude towards partners about conditions that hinder 'working from the purpose', to build bridges between the organization and partners.
- Introduce issue management: engage in conversations with external partners whenever they can't provide the circumstances necessary to reach the population goal (outcome for the client), or whenever the collaboration means an employee has to do work that doesn't contribute to the purpose (organization goal). This means making agreements with separate chain partners, so that working methods are attuned to each other and don't create obstacles for the implementation of the new method.
- Be flexible in your collaboration, but never with respect to the purpose.



- Talk about the client, instead of with them. The client is not usually present in conversations between chain partners. To realize the purpose, the client's needs must be clear to everyone. This is only possible if all conversations are held with everyone involved.

Organization: external system interventions

Examples of external system interventions within Child protection services

► Issue management

Child protection services managers in Amsterdam talked to the court, the police, and healthcare providers whenever procedures were not compatible with the new approach. For example, the court did not accept the new 'family plan', asking for a separately filled out intake form. This is not value work. After several issues and conversations this was changed and the family plan was accepted.

► Together with the client

In the new approach the family is invited to join meetings with all involved parties (executive meetings). This contributes to the joint learning process and a successful implementation of the new working method.

► Share information

Widely disseminate information on the new organizational approach by:

- Promotional film for chain partners
- Newsletter
- Conference/workshop on the new working method

“We use issue management if another organization does not fulfill a promise they made earlier, for example, providing therapy for a child. In that case I contact the other organization and together we look at what went wrong within their organization, causing them to break their promise. It takes some guts for me to interfere with another organization [...] But because we are talking about our purpose, we have to be able to find common ground.”

(Team manager Child protection services
Amsterdam)

SPEAKING

Team manager Child
protection services
Amsterdam



Organization: internal system interventions

The challenge

Implementing a new approach leads to changes in your working relationships. Sometimes the environment can be a hindrance, and it can be difficult to continue working from the purpose because of system complications (issues). One of the risks is that employees might fall back into old patterns when working with partners. For example, if an organization wants information on a child in a different format than delivered. Or if an organization can't provide the right care and a suboptimal solution is chosen. How do you make sure that employees recognize system obstructions when working with partners, and keep working to realize the purpose of the organization?

Do's & Don'ts



- Develop a system to quickly recognize, take up, and solve system complications (issues). For example, by addressing these issues in case discussions.
- Stimulate a culture in which system issues are continuously discussed, taken up, and solved by higher management.
- Create special meetings in which persistent system issues are dealt with.



- Go with the least bad solution
- “Blame” employees when the system prevents them from doing their job

Organization: internal system interventions

Examples of internal system interventions within Child protection services

► Issue management

If the purpose cannot be achieved because of system conditions, a system intervention is necessary. At Child protection services Amsterdam this is called issue management. There is a culture, put forward by management, which stimulates employees to report issues as soon as possible, whenever they are unable to solve them themselves.

► “De-blame” employees

Employees often feel that it's their fault if something doesn't work out in a case. This makes it difficult to have open discussions about issues. At Child protection services Amsterdam supervisors consciously “de-blame” employees, making it easier for employees to seek help with issues they can't solve themselves.

► Escalate

Whenever an employee can't solve an issue, the team gets to work. If they are unsuccessful, the team manager takes up the case. If *they* are unsuccessful, the board will take it up. This is called “escalating the issue”. This is done until the issue is resolved and the purpose can be realized.

► Complex cases

At Child protection services Amsterdam, long-term and complex cases are discussed in a special meeting in order to realize a breakthrough. Nobody leaves until a new solution direction is found to achieve the purpose.

“Issue management also means: if you encounter a law or a protocol that keeps you from providing the necessary care for a child (every child safe), you take this to your team manager. If the team manager can't solve it, they take the issue to the board. And if need be, the board can go to the legislator to address this impractical application of the law.”

(Team manager Child protection services Amsterdam)

The challenge

Implementation is a process, and during this process it's important to base the design of the process on reliable and up-to-date information. That information can be collected and plays a role on every level of the organization, from case discussions to board/management. In this way the implementation of the new working method is optimally supported.

Examples of data-driven work within Child protection services Amsterdam

► Family level

Child protection services employees hand out two scores (from 0 to 10) after every conversation with a family: 1) For the level of current safety (at the time of the conversation), and 2) For the extent to which lasting safety (the so-called central line) of the children has been achieved. This is an aid to talk more specifically about the family's progress, with the family and in the team meeting.

► Team level

At team level, information is available on case lead times, the duration of the current phase of the case, etc. Furthermore, information is available at team level on the yearly audits of team functioning.

> continue reading

Do's & Don'ts



- Organize files in such a way that some core data always gives insight into client progress (monitoring client development).
- Design audits in such a way that relevant information on the progress/development of employees and teams is visible.
- Organize collaborations with researchers to map and study the progress/development of the organization.



- Collect information that is not being used to learn and doesn't contribute to the desired outcomes (population and organization).
- Have employees take measurements that only benefit them in the long run - the measurement itself should immediately contribute to the work.

Examples of data-driven work within Child protection services

► Trainings

Information from client satisfaction research, audits, and programme compliance measurements is used to adapt trainings for employees to currently existing difficulties in executing the working method.

► Scientific research

Child protection services Amsterdam runs a research programme and maintains (inter)national partnerships with scientists from various work fields. By researching employee questions, client characteristics, or for example employee competences, information is gathered on the extent to which the innovation implementation is successful and produces the intended results.

► Meaningful measurements

Measuring tools are designed in such a manner that they not only yield useful data for management and science, but that taking the measurements themselves immediately helps employees. For example, filling out the safety measurement (ARIJ) is essential and useful for both employee and family, and simultaneously produces meaningful information for larger studies.

“Meaningful measurements for us are child safety and the central line (a description of the goal you envision for the child and family). Both are rated on a scale from 0-10. We always ask the question: “Why is it that number, and what actions will you take to improve it?”

(Director Child protection services Amsterdam)

Organization: the facilitating organization

The challenge

Employees do their job at the office, at home, and at the client's home in order to realize the purpose of the organization. The challenge is ensuring that their environment supports them in this. It's vital that employees have access to support in their primary work process, and that they can easily utilize and trust this support. Support starts with the physical environment where the work takes place, IT, and other supporting services, such as legal advice, policy advice, and HR management. All of these serve the employees' realisation of the purpose in the primary work process.

Examples of a physical environment serving the purpose within Child protection services

► Mission (purpose)

The physical environment represents the purpose of the organization. The mission of the organization ("every child safe, forever") can be found throughout the entire building in the form of text and success stories.

> continue reading

Do's & Don'ts



- One office with enough flexible workplaces.
- The purpose/mission visible throughout the entire building.
- A safe and warm working environment.



- Closed-off workplaces.
- An us-them mentality.
- Cut back on facilities that are necessary to realize the purpose.

"Our mission 'every child safe, forever' is visible in everything that we do. We started thinking about how to best facilitate family managers to achieve this goal. This shows all throughout our building, lockers, coffee to go, but also in the fact that we have fewer buildings. We used to have seven, now we have one."

Facilities team manager

Organization: the facilitating organization

Examples of a physical environment serving the purpose within Child protection services

► Reflection rooms

All employees get together in one building to help each other and to reflect together. To prevent compartmentalization and separation, every workplace is a flexible workplace. There are also plenty of spaces for teams and employees to get together to talk and reflect on cases. These spaces are equipped with all necessary facilities (flipchart, large screen).

► Pleasant and safe space

The building has a pleasant atmosphere: good lighting, a colourful environment, places where people can get together (plaza) or unwind, good tea and coffee, and good catering. A safe and pleasant building (including the entrance) creates a feeling of trust with employees and clients.

► Accessibility

Child protection services is easily accessible for clients and employees.

“Throughout the entire building “spots” started to appear, where for example all behaviour psychologists or all lawyers would sit down. This way, every question could immediately be answered, even when the own behaviour psychologist was absent that day.”

Knowledge ambassador Child protection services

Organization: the facilitating organization – IT

Examples of IT support serving the purpose at Child protection services

▶ Mobile working

Employees must have access to the Child protection services network wherever they are. By using a laptop/tablet and a mobile phone hotspot the employee, together with chain partner and client, can work on realizing the purpose wherever they are.

▶ Accessible

Child protection services employees have access to reports wherever they are. The report systems are accessible and comprehensible for employees and clients. Meaningful measurements (for example, questionnaires) can easily be inserted and visualized.

▶ Security

The Child protection services system is accessible but safe, thanks to the use of encryption and VPN connections (for example, Citrix).

▶ Digital meeting point

A pleasant, physical environment to come together is important, but a comprehensible digital meeting point to share experiences, questions, and knowledge is also vital. Child protection services uses the platform Pleio for this.

Do's & Don'ts



- Keep IT simple and accessible.
- Have one service point for help and questions.
- Stimulate IT use to share knowledge and experiences.



- Pay too little attention to good security.

“People are equipped with laptop, smartphone, we have cars ready to go: everything is focused on visiting our clients and realizing the purpose.”

Facilities team manager Amsterdam

Organization: the facilitating organization – Service department

Examples of services supporting the purpose at Child protection services

► Counsel serving the purpose

Advice or training is also done from the purpose of the organization. Supporting staff, from the receptionist to the policy maker and trainer, are all part of Child protection services and serve the purpose of the organization as well.

► Demand-oriented instead of supply-oriented

Supporting staff work in the primary process, which gives them better insight into the best courses of action. Training or counselling happens based on the demands of the teams, not as a 'fixed' offer.

► Academy (Learning & Development)

An academy of and by employees with internally trained instructors who are also active in the work field. All employees follow recently released trainings taught by their colleagues.

► Social enterprise

Child protection services counsels and trains other organizations in youth care. This way, the organization valorizes acquired knowledge and invests in people and knowledge in order to better realize the purpose (see issue management).

Do's & Don'ts



- Supporting staff also works from the purpose.
- Supporting staff is easily approachable for employees.



- Offer the same support to everyone (supply-oriented) instead of demand-oriented (what do employees actually need).

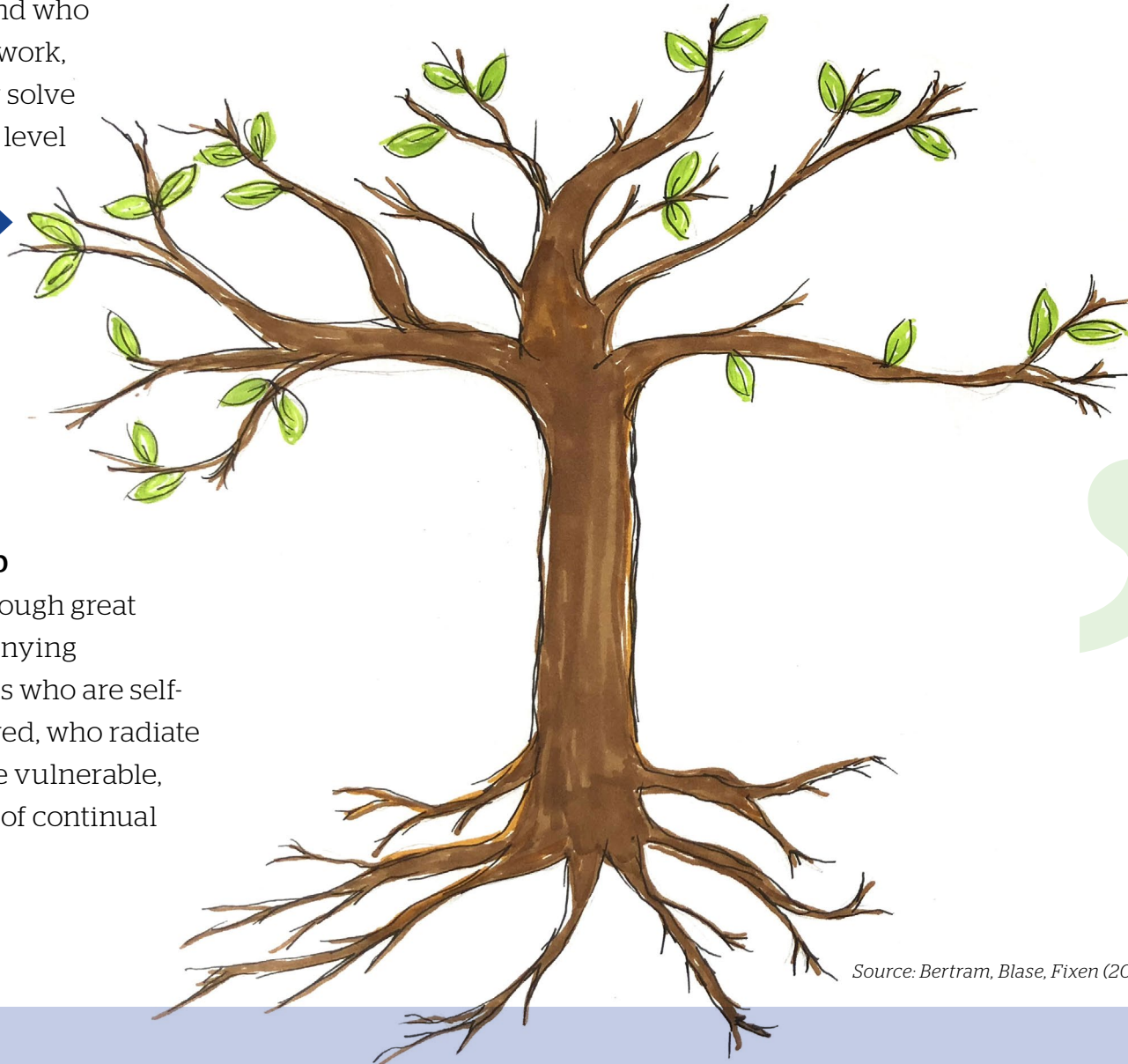
“Lastly, you have to keep looking at what the client needs. Value work is found in the contact between client and family manager. The organization must facilitate the manager so they can focus on that contact as much as possible. This requires continuous learning from the organization, and a vulnerable attitude in all organizational layers.”

Director, Child protection services Amsterdam

6. Leadership

Technical leadership

Great change requires leaders who focus on solutions, and who utilize their authority, network, and knowledge to quickly solve practical problems on the level of employees and the organization system. →



Facilitating leadership

An organization going through great change (and the accompanying insecurities) needs leaders who are self-aware, intrinsically involved, who radiate confidence, and dare to be vulnerable, in order to build a culture of continual learning. →



As a leader you continually work out different scenarios, always working from the purpose. But you're willing to change course whenever necessary, and still working from the purpose.

Source: Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015)

The challenge

How do you effectively lead an organization in the midst of change? When do you hold onto a technical leadership (top-down guidance with procedures and activities) and when do you switch to a facilitating leadership (intuiting what must be done, especially when there are no simple, clear-cut answers yet)? And how do you do this? It can be tricky as a leader to find the right balance, but as leader of an organization in change you must focus mainly on providing bottom-up support for your employees in implementing a new approach (focused on the goal).

Examples of facilitating leadership within Child protection services

► Design process

A framework was created for the work by making the purpose the core matter. Every team contributed to the development of a single work process, which leaves room for the professional development of the employee.

► Open dialogue

There is a continuous open dialogue between management and employees. Management engages in conversation with professionals daily, in order to understand what they need to realize the purpose.

> continue reading

Do's & Don'ts



- Stand firm in your purpose and vision, while also sharing dilemmas and vulnerabilities.
- Stimulate a learning culture in which employee ownership of problems and solutions is stimulated; this helps develop upward and downward problem-solving capability.
- Be present in the workplace; make sure you know what goes on there.
- Provide back-up for employees implementing new plans.



- Let support structures (protocols, procedures, structures) dominate; they are a way to achieve your purpose, not a goal in and of themselves.

Examples of facilitating leadership within Child protection services

► Questions

Management at Child protection services Amsterdam continually asks 'difficult' questions and stimulates employees to follow this example: What is the purpose of the organization? What are we here? What is the problem? Why is the organization currently facing a crisis?

► Co-owner

All executive (line) managers at Child protection services have become co-owners of the problem and solution. For example, when 'enrolling' the new approach, weekly discussions were held with supervisors on what works and what's proving difficult during the implementation.

► Flexible

Child protection services had a plan for the implementation that gave direction to the process, but was also flexible and adaptive. You must be able to deviate from the plan at any moment if this is necessary in light of the intended change.

“Within Child protection services we work with facilitating leadership by being present in the workplace as much as possible, and by continually having conversations on how to ensure every child is safe, forever. What can I do for you, to help you reach that goal?”

(Director Child protection services Amsterdam)

SPEAKING

Director Child protection services Amsterdam

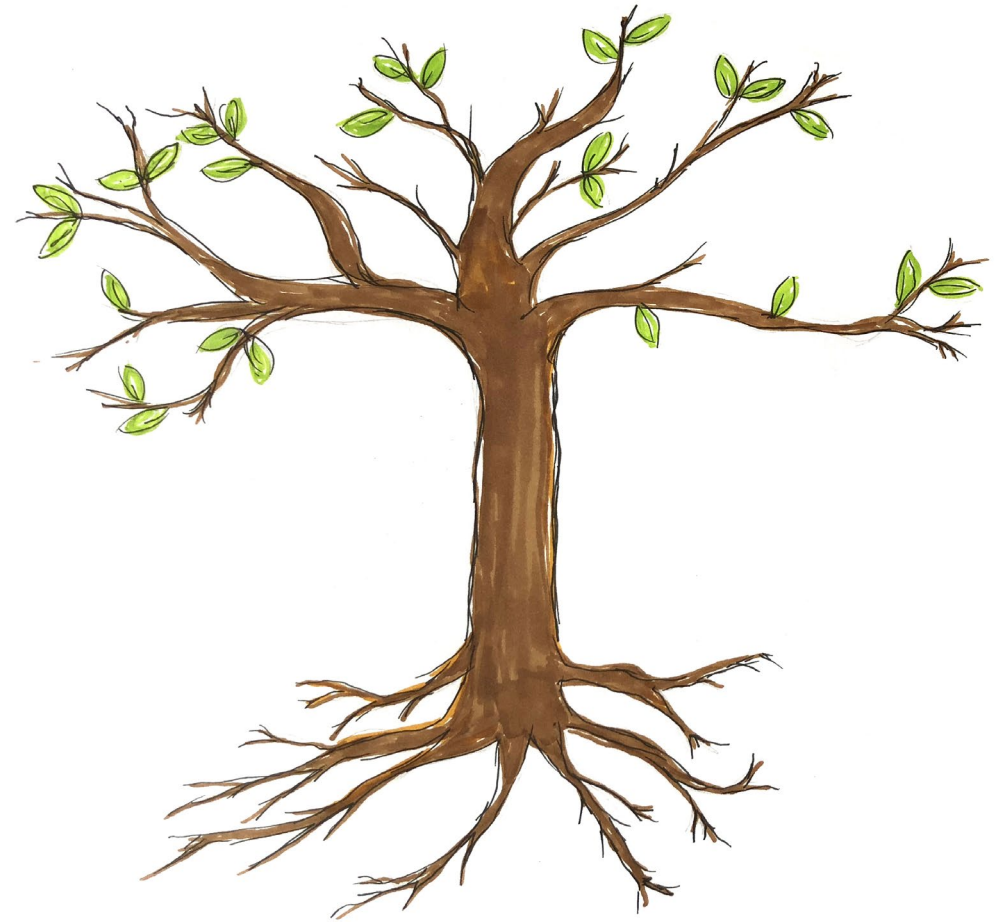


7. Method

The information in this document is based on:

- A session with the researchers and representatives of Child protection services Amsterdam, in which the components of intensive family case management and the implementation strategies used within Child protection services Amsterdam were analyzed, and in which the model of Bertram, Blase, Fixen (2015) was selected as the basis for analysis.
- Analysis of documents (see sources)
- Interviews with several researchers and representatives of Child protection services Amsterdam, Child protection services West in The Hague, and Intervence in Middelburg.
- Analysis of the accumulated material through the utilized analysis model.

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Blog (Weblog) and Video Blog Post

Include the title of the message and the URL. Please note that titles for items in online communities (e.g. blogs, newsgroups, forums) are not italicized. If the author's name is not available, provide the screen name.

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