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Session 2: Organisational architecture in service provision.

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Dear colleagues,

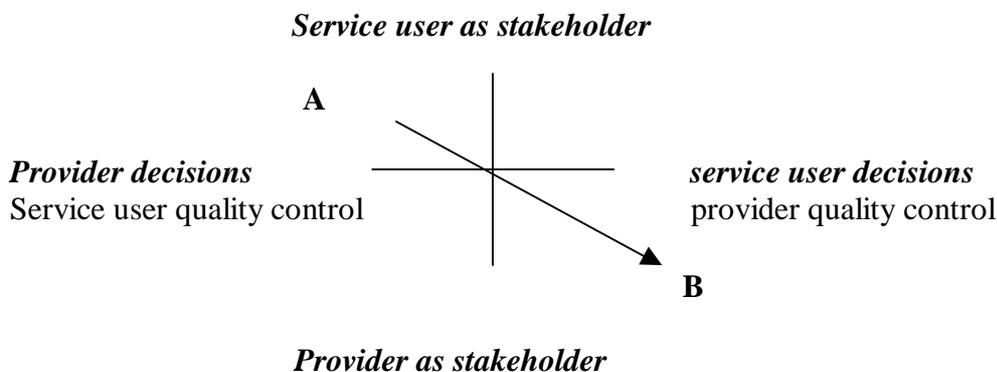
In recent, modern times, service providers became professional organisations, with their focus on (as the official programme of this conference puts it:) "appropriate institutional structures".

In our, post modern, time the answer to the question: what is the best way to structure our services is not a simple one.

The answer is not: *big trusts with small scale facilities*, neither variations on the *small is beautiful*- theme.

The answer can't be given in any organisational structure but in the organisational culture. The answer for post modern organisations is in *the way in which they are organising themselves*.

To share some light on this rather theoretical concept the following drawing may help.



Vertical axe : transaction axe

Horizontal axe: arrangement axe

We are moving, perhaps slowly but very surely, from the **A** to the **B** quadrant: from Modern towards Post Modern ways of thinking and in the framework of society organising. This implies that there is a choice for the service user. In a world in which the customer has no choice it is the provider that decides. In our situation in Rotterdam Holland, I am glad to say, that disabled people can choose. One might say that there's not enough choice but due to person centred budgets and individualisation in care and support arrangements there is a growing number of choices for everyone.

I am not saying we are there, I am saying we are moving in this direction.

Service users have money and at the end of the day, money is power. He who pays, says. If this is direct income for care providers (as with the person centered budget) or indirect (as with an arrangement paid for in kind to the individual but as income to the providers) is not important. Individual support and care arrangements are owned by the service user and she/he decides where she/he is going to invest.

No investment; no stakeholder no income for the organisation.

In the Post Modern quadrant it is not the organisation that decides what the product will look like, but the other way around: the product determines the organisational form.

In the Profit sector this is common practice.

In the Not for Profit World this is, still, quite a revolutionary thought.

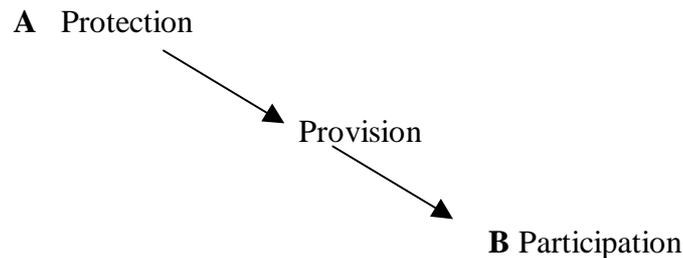
The organisation in the B quadrant is hardly visible. It is like society itself: without a solid centre of control. Protection of the unorganised service users remains essential.

To give a voice to the disabled minorities remains essential and becomes, more than organising care, our core business.

But we will do so not on forehand: we do not plan the lives of our service users anymore but rather make sure, in professional reflection, support them in their choices.

Anticipation and preparing for disaster is the Modern organising culture.

Reflection and supporting self-advocacy is the Post Modern culture.



(I like to add here that Reflection seems to me to be the essence of European culture. The ability to bring herself under discussion is the basis of the EU as well as of this very STEPS project itself).

To repeat myself in negative terms: **A** is the promise of order and safety.

B represents atomisation and juridification and chaos.

Chaos, but creative chaos if one has the right mindset. Then we call it diversity. And diversity is strength.

Service providers like PameijerKeerkring are out there, IN society, part of society.

Closing contracts, interactive in their services and in their structures

because their culture is flexible and interactive.

In the **B** quadrant there is no room for hierarchical relations.

Here the true Network organisations are born: they connect and disconnect without the vertical control (as in A).

Horizontal control (B) is based on mutual interest; looking for Non Zero relations (In management jargon: Win Win). In session 3 my colleagues from Rotterdam will

give examples of how we work together to give shape to these thoughts in everyday life. Basically the only question in organisational terms is: how can we assist our service users to become stakeholders?

Modern organisations can be excellent from a vertical perspective *without being good on the horizontal axe*. When people become shareholders they have an interest in the organisation. Consumer interest and economical survival are one and the same thing! There is no contradiction, not even tension, between user orientation and economical success of our not for profit organisations. A question like: "is user orientation expensive?" misses the point completely in post modern times. If any service user doesn't like the services or the support he/she receives the person goes somewhere else.

Good from the Control side of things, bad from the lived through experiences of the service users themselves.

In service provision it is the horizontal axe that gives the legitimisation, the *raison d'être*, of any organisation.

To (try to) guarantee safety by stopping cultural and/or organisational changes leads to a standstill of any growth and development, also on the personal level of the service user.

To change service providing organisations without offering the essential safeguards leads to chaos instead of emancipation of the service users.

Robert Pirsig, a Swede by birth, talks about *static quality* that only in combination with *dynamic quality* is true quality. His plea for a this combining of the static and the dynamic (especially in: *LILA*) I still find inspiring.

Our organisations are in the transition from **A** to **B**.

In the old days organisations had to grow to survive.

This policy of survival can be successful for some time (ask the dinosaurs, they reigned the planet for millennia).

Dinosaurs are the champions of Structure, the rulers of the **A** quadrant.

The process of life itself is, in this manner of speaking, Culture.

Culture is mind and mind is a process rather than a thing.

It is culture, much more than structure, that produces quality.

In life and in services and in Support.

Quality needs involvement.

Quality needs movement.

And, in marketing terms, quality is what the service user decides it is.

Organisations should facilitate service users to do their own way of doing things or stop doing things at all. Personal clients budgets will see to that!

It is not in the structure of our organisations that the answer to the question: "Why do disabled people choose our organisation?" is found.

The answer is found in the people who work with the service users directly.

Underpaid and overworked they may be: the human factor is the critical factor.

It is in Modern times, it will be even more in Post Modern times when more service providers are entering the market.

A or B? Some challenges still need to be answered. There is the issue of how to give a voice to people who haven't learned to speak or who are afraid to speak up for themselves. We do not have a blueprint. PameijerKeerkring stimulates initiatives from service users and their families. Self advocacy movements, also Circles of Friends, also initiatives that are difficult to hang a label on since it is such an individual initiative.

It is not about giving A voice to people, it is about listening tot what individuals have to say.

How do we organise our hearing?

To put it in one dimensional terms: we constructed an Individual Development plan. At least once a year but usually twice per year there is a formal meeting with the service user and his/her family, friends and/or proxies.

This is not enough, this is to meet the formal criteria of the quadrant on the bottom on the left.

This doesn't guarantee quality, still we accept the reality of the Red Tape (bureaucrazy).

The balance between dynamic and static quality shifts.

Still...the tension between contact and contract or: Intimacy versus professional distance or Control versus innovation or the tension between the Service or Support paradigms remain, yes, in a different form, but still very much alive. Vitality seems a product of non coordination. Our decisionistic thought patterns simply can't swallow this fact.

However, the human element is the constant factor in all variables.

Isn't it reassuring to know that some things will never change?

PameijerKeerkring and OMIJ and other organisations are ambitious. Keep in mind that modesty is the biggest ambition there is.

Thank you.

Bart Branderhorst