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CORPORATE CULTURE AS FACTOR FOR ORGANIZATION'S RESILIENCE

The feeling of an increased, intrinsic uncertainty, due to the rapidly changing situation in the financial sector, consumer attitude changes, growing employees' expectations and the significant political uncertainty in a digitally transformed world, forces organizations to invest in developing new coping strategies. Thus, in this changing environment, along with the issue of efficiency, the need for the organizations to protect themselves from and pass through a variety of potential shocks and crises becomes of a primary importance.

The article outlines the thesis of the organization's resilience as a competence to overcome the shocks and to retain organization's main purpose by creating an adequate corporate culture that encourages the continuous exchange of information, the empowerment of every employee to react independently and in a timely manner, and the employees' dedication for work. An essential part of this type of corporate culture is also the acceptance of the idea that disruptions represent a part of the functioning of each organization and therefore a special attention has to be paid to conditioning for such extreme situations.

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Introduction

The dynamic developments in today's environment constantly expose organizations to various kinds of challenges – entire industries are collapsing, financial markets are experiencing disruptions, consumer preferences and expectations are changing rapidly, employees express new attitudes and look for flexible working conditions and all that in a situation of significant political uncertainty in a digitally transformed world. The feeling of increased, intrinsic uncertainty, arising from these increasingly complicated processes, forces organizations to invest in developing new coping strategies. Thus, in this changed environment, along with the issue of efficiency, the need for organizations to protect themselves from and pass through a variety of shocks and crises becomes of a primary

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importance. To designate the competence of organizations to cope with all this, researchers develop the concept of organization's *resilience*[2].

This drives the organizations – on one hand – to increase their sensitivity to dynamic changes in the environment and on the other – to develop their inner potential to address unexpected and difficult to predict situations. Thus, the attention is focused on building a corporate culture, structuring processes and promoting relationships in a way that supports resilience.

The aim of the paper is to explore the concept of organization's resilience and to highlight key corporate culture features that favor the development of organization's resilience.

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The Concept of Organization's Resilience

The feeling of a growing uncertainty leads organizations to a more complex understanding of their relationships with the environment inside and outside of them. At the heart of this understanding lies the concept of the flexible, responsive and tough organization, also referred to as *organization's resilience*.

According to Brand and Jax the concept of resilience is one of the most important research topics in the context of achieving sustainability. They make a thorough review of key papers related to resilience. They found that first introduced as a descriptive ecological term (Holling, 1973), resilience has been frequently redefined and extended by heuristic, metaphorical, or normative dimensions (e.g., Holling, 2001, Ott and Döring, 2004, Pickett et al. 2004, Hughes et al. 2005). Meanwhile, the concept is used by various scientific disciplines as an approach to analyze ecological as well as social-ecological systems (Anderies et al., 2006, Folke, 2006). As such, it promotes research efforts across disciplines and between science and policy (Brand and Jax, 2007).

Brand and Jax clearly state the difference between two views of resilience. It has been coined engineering resilience (Holling, 1996) and is largely identical to the stability property, i.e., elasticity (Grimm and Wissel, 1997). The second meaning of resilience refers to dynamics far from any equilibrium steady-state and is defined as the amount of disturbance that a system can absorb before changing to another stable regime, which is

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[2] The term derives from the Latin verb „*resilio*", meaning *to ricochet, to rebound*; In English *resilience* – flexibility, elasticity, toughness, mobility (Chambers English Dictionary, 7th Edition, 1988); in Oxford dictionary *resilience* is defined as "the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006).

controlled by a different set of variables and characterized by a different structure. It has been termed ecosystem resilience (Gunderson and Holling, 2002) and it is applied almost interchangeable with the words ecological resilience (e.g., Holling, 1996, Gunderson and Pritchard 2002, Anderies et al. 2006) or resilience (e.g., Holling, 1973, 1986, Arrow et al. 1995, Perrings et al. 1995, Carpenter et al. 2001, Folke et al. 2004, Carpenter and Folke, 2006).

The term *resilience* could be found in a number of disciplines such as economics, ecology, politics, cognitive science, digital technology, corporate governance, etc. in the context of many important questions like these: What causes one system to break and another to rebound? How much change can a system absorb and still retain its integrity and purpose? Which features make the system adaptive to change? How to build a shock absorption mechanism for yourself, for the communities, for the company, for the economy, for the society and for the planet? All these questions desperately needing their answers today.

In engineering, *resilience* refers to the degree to which a structure like a bridge or a building can return to a baseline state after being disturbed. In emergency response, it suggests the speed with which critical systems can be restored after an earthquake or a flood. In ecology, it signifies ecosystem's ability to keep from being irrevocably degraded. In psychology, resilience is associated with the individual's capacity to deal effectively with traumatic experience. In business, it often means putting in place back-ups (of data and resources) to provide continuity of operation in the face of natural or man-made disasters.

Facing hard challenges organizations nowadays refer to the concept of resilience in order to find adequate approaches of overcoming difficulties. "If we cannot control the volatile tides of change, we can learn to build better boats," say Zolli and Healey and continue, "We can design - and redesign - organizations, institutions and systems to better absorb disruptions, operate under a wide variety of conditions and shift more fluidly from one circumstance to the next." (Zolli and Healey, 2012, p 5). In this context, they justify their understanding of *resilience* and define it as *"the capacity of a system, enterprise, or a person to maintain its core purpose and integrity in the face of dramatically changed circumstances"(*Zolli and Healey, 2012, p.7). This definition is an appropriate one to be taken as a basic one for the goals of this paper related to outlining the interconnections between resilience and corporate culture.

Close to this understanding is also Yossi Sheffi, who in his book, „The Resilient Organization" studies the ways in which companies can recover from high-impact disruptions. The focus is on the actions they should take to lower their vulnerability and increase their resilience. Sheffi refers to the importance of the concept of resilience in the materials sciences, where resilience represents the ability of a material to recover its original shape following a deformation. For companies, it measures "their ability to, and the speed at which they can, return to their normal performance level following a high-impact/low-probability disruption" (Sheffi, 2005).

Houston represents the *resilience* of a community as "the capacity to 'bounce forward' following an adverse event such as a disaster or a crisis (Houston, 2015, p. 176). The bouncing portion of this resilience metaphor represents a return to a pre-crisis baseline level on one or more indicators (e.g. well-being, functioning) following a temporary disruption in

those variables caused by the adverse event. The forward component of the resilience metaphor represents the passing of time that occurs and is necessary for the return to baseline (Houston, 2018). The forward element also captures the reality that the return to baseline is not simply a return to how things were before the event, as it includes adjustments to the new reality that has been shaped by the event.

Based on these observations two main aspects related to resilience could be pointed out: the continuity of operation and the restoration in the case of dramatically changed circumstances. More generally, the concept of resilience leads to disclosure of the basic principles on how to build social, economic, technical and business systems able to anticipate disruptions, to recover when disturbed and reorganize in a way to perform their main objective under radically changed circumstances.

To improve organization's resilience, according to Zolli and Healy, is to enhance its ability to resist being pushed from its preferred state, while expanding the range of alternatives that it can embrace if needed (Zolli and Healy, 2012). This is what resilience researchers call preserving the adaptive capacity - the ability to adapt to changed circumstances. According to Brand and Jax it also should be stressed that community resilience is exhibited by adaptation following an event, but resilient communities are also able to anticipate and plan for events before they occur (Brand & Jax, 2007).

In this sense enhancing the resilience of an eco-system, economy or community comprises of two abilities: ability to resist being pushed past these kinds of critical, sometimes damaging thresholds and by preserving and what is really more important – expanding the range of niches to which a system can healthily adapt if it is pushed past such thresholds. At the times of unpredictable disruptions and volatilities it is of key importance for the organizations to encourage corporate culture which nurtures these two abilities.

Defining Corporate Culture as Management Tool

Corporate culture as a linking force creates stability for the organizations. It strengthens organization's integrity thanks to the employees' commitment to a coherent system of agreed values. This is the essence of the definition of Andrew Pettigrew, who points out that corporate culture is "the system of such publicly and collectively accepted meanings operating for a given group at a given time. This system of terms, forms, categories, and images interprets a people's own situation to themselves" (Pettigrew, 1979, p. 574). These are the underlying assumptions that the members of the organization adhere to in their behavior and actions. These assumptions are related to the individual's perception of the surrounding environment and the values to which he adheres. In this sense, organizational culture has a regulating function due to the fact that people have mastered models of perception, interpretation and response to situations that provide them with sense and comfort. Thus, corporate culture, based on continuity, provides sustainability.

The importance of corporate culture for synchronizing processes within an organization and for integrating it into an entity has been pointed out by researchers in various aspects. Formal and informal social processes in an organization are viewed by (Dutton and Pener,

1993) as being realized within the corporate culture – by communicating the basic assumptions, values and norms around which the members of the organization come together and identify with it.

Corporate culture is also an effective tool to help achieve some of the strategic goals of the organization, such as the employee motivation, engagement, and the overall recruitment process (Hutch and Schultz, 1997).

Schein outlines the interconnection between corporate culture development and the process of solving the problems of external adaptation and internal integration by defining the corporate culture as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group has learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to these problems (Schein, 1992). Once these patterns have been learned they function to reduce anxiety and provide a moment to moment meaning and predictability to daily events. So if the concept of culture is to have any utility, it should draw our attention to those things that are the product of our human need for stability, consistency, and meaning. Culture formation is always, by definition, a striving toward patterning and integration.

These basic assumptions form the basis of Schein's three levels corporate culture model (Schein, 2013). The model comprises of: (1) visible and feelable "artifacts", (2) espoused beliefs and values and or (3) less visible, taken for granted shared basic assumptions. The artifacts include the visible, hearable, feelable manifestations of the underlying assumptions (e.g., behavior patterns, rituals, physical environment, dress codes, stories, myths, products, etc.). Shared values include the espoused reasons for why things should be as they are (e.g., charters, goal statements, norms, codes of ethics, company value statements). Shared basic assumptions include the invisible but superficial reasons why group members perceive, think and feel the way they do about external survival and internal integration issues (e.g. assumptions about mission, means, relationships, reality, time, space, etc.).

According to Schein once a set of shared basic assumptions is formed by this process, it can function as a cognitive defense mechanism both for the individual members and for the group as a whole. In other words, individuals and groups seek stability and meaning. Once achieved, it is easier to distort new data by denial, projection, rationalization, or various other defense mechanisms than to change the basic assumption. Culture change, in the sense of changing basic assumptions is, therefore, difficult, time-consuming, and highly anxiety-provoking – a point that is especially relevant for the leader who sets out to change the culture of the organization. The most central issue for leaders, therefore, is how to get at the deeper levels of a culture, how to assess the functionality of the assumptions made at that level, and how to deal with the anxiety that is unleashed when those levels are challenged (Schein, 2004). So it becomes a question of primary importance for the leaders how to manage the cultural evolution and change in such a way that the group can survive in a changing environment.

When the organization faces challenging events some of these culture elements may appear to be dysfunctional and then changes have to be made. It is not an easy thing because the very function of the culture is to strive to patterning but nowadays there are growing

numbers of situations when the patterns do not work and actions should be taken very urgently in order to protect the organization.

So developing a corporate culture adequate to cope with rapid disruptions needs a complex approach in order to maintain the existing culture in its functional aspects but also be able to detect the right direction and be sensitive enough to adapt corporate culture specifics to meet the main challenges.

Corporate Culture Characteristics of Resilient Organization

The corporate culture of resilient organizations focuses on enhancing the adaptability of the organization by determining the set of principles that guide the development of a strategy to overcome new and unforeseen circumstances. The framework of principles embedded in the corporate culture of a resilient organization makes it possible to observe processes in the triangle problems-solutions-motivation of employees from a different point of view. Adequately motivated and empowered employees become capable of generating a vision of change and finding ways and resources to implement it. Positioned as proactive actors in the organization, they are able to coordinate their efforts for product innovation, alternative solutions and the introduction of new working practices in organizations.

Sheffi brings out four leading features of the corporate culture of resilient organizations that apply to organizations from different spheres of activity (Sheffi, 2005). At a first glance, the free movement of ideas and activities in Dell, efficiency based on stringent regulations in UPS, and the command and control structure of the US Navy appear to have little in common. Yet, says Sheffi, these three organizations are flexible and resilient - they react quickly to disruptions, ensuring that small shocks do not get big. The main features of corporate culture that allow these organizations to respond quickly and flexibly can be defined as:

- Continuous communication among informed employees

- Distributed power

- Passion for the work

- Conditioning for disruption

These characteristics represent a combination of established practices, shared beliefs and values and shared basic assumptions which means that they are successfully integrated into all three levels of corporate culture as defined in Schein's model.

Based on these practices, values and assumptions a network of adequate relationships within the organization is created so that changes in the environment are timely reflected and response is given on time and on the spot, taking into account the overall picture and the organization's role in it.

Continuous Communications among Informed Employees

Fast and flexible organizations continuously transfer information about all aspects of their activities in all directions. For example, Toyota continually gives information about its production to the various units; Dell updates production data to all its managers every hour; UPS maintains its broad network through constant communications; aircraft carrier deck operations are performed under the control of the air wing commander and through constant communication in several interconnected communication networks. When a disruption occurs, these communications provide employees with information about the immediate state of the system so that they can respond intelligently and instantly.

However, intensive communications, under certain conditions, may not achieve the desired result and people may "tune out" if data they receive is irrelevant to them, if they do not trust the sender, if they are not empowered to act in accordance with the information they receive. It is therefore important that they receive the information they need from a source they trust to and have the opportunity to act in accordance with it. This comes into relation with the second characteristic of the corporate culture of resilient organizations - distributed power.

Information on how things are done within the organization is delivered through formal training, job descriptions, and standard operating procedures. Since the organizations described here are large, one can hardly comprehend the complexity of the whole operation. So people can be placed in different positions to build a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the whole business. Examples include Dell's project teams that are periodically formed and dismantled, as well as the changing positions on an aircraft carrier and between navy ships and shore services, as well as the redirection of UPS managers to different positions in the various subdivisions.

The high intensity of communications brings benefits only if the managers have a thorough knowledge of the activity so that they "know what they are talking about". The leaders of the organizations mentioned here are the ideal examples of such managers. David Abny, CEO and Chairman of UPS, started with the company in 1974 in a small division in Mississippi. Mike Eskew, the former Chief Executive Officer, has been in the company since 1972 and has begun as an engineering trainee. Michael Dell founded Dell and is still very committed to the day-to-day operations of the company. Also the chief petty officers, who in practice can run any navy ship, change positions on different ships, so with their long experience they transmit the "naval way" to the new officers.

All these organizations constantly train new people and develop processes to ensure that they hire the right people. In this sense, hiring a large number of people is not seen as a problem, but rather as an opportunity to employ the types of individuals most likely to fit into the company and then be indoctrinated within the corporate culture.

Since 1984 Dell has grown from a single entrepreneur in a Texas dorm room to a global manufacturer with more than 50,000 employees. UPS from the Seattle bicycle messenger service (founded in 1907) became the world's largest package delivery company, then became a technology company, an international operator and an airline. Each phase

requires the recruitment of thousands of people and they become part of the corporate culture.

When Toyota expands to the United States, it employs thousands of American workers to produce cars of comparable quality to their Japanese counterparts. Toyota avoids hiring American car industry workers and prefers to hire employees without previous manufacturing experience to train them in their own processes and culture. Their success has shown that it is the processes and culture that make Toyota successful, not the origin of the workforce.

The US Navy is also an example of a truly impressive success in recruiting and indoctrinating people in the organization. The Navy continually introduces new employees to their aircraft carriers, educates them and gives them significant responsibilities at an early age (the average age of 9000 sailors in Theodore Roosevelt battle group and of 5000 Amphibian sailors is 22-23 years old).

All these organizations constantly transfer knowledge and cultural norms to new people and people to new positions. This knowledge transfer supports the organization's culture and the way it functions. It takes place through the artifacts (such as the dress code, the benefits for the employees, etc.), the accepted values (stated in the mission) and the shared basic assumptions, integrated with the corporate culture. In this way the proper understanding about the functions and the place of each employee within the organization represents an adequate basis for taking part in the process of continuous communication. This refers also to the high-level managers who also have a deep understanding of the specifics of different positions and thus they are able to adapt their communication messages and behavior since they have usually gained tremendous experience before taking the command.

In a conclusion Sheffi points out that communicating with employees on a strategic level (regarding the mission and the strategy of the company), a tactical level (the main hurdles and main initiatives this quarter and this month), and an operational level (the current status of the production, shipments, cash flow, inventories, and commitments) keeps everybody "on the same page." (Sheffi, 2005). Coupled with empowering employees to take actions when necessary, such extensive communications allow them to contribute efficiently to flexible operations.

Distributed Power

In situations that require an immediate response, flexible organizations allow and empower individual actions by the "first responders". These are the people who are on the front line and have to act immediately. They will most likely notice the problem first and their immediate reaction can prevent expanding it.

The distributed power and empowerment is an indispensable feature of successful and flexible organizations. For example, every Toyota worker can report a quality problem if he finds one. Within seconds, supervisors and specialists will get to the spot and try to solve the problem. If the problem cannot be eliminated within 60 seconds, the production line will stop and the problem will be resolved before restarting the line. Providing such

responsibilities at the lower levels in the organization is one of the ingredients of Toyota's success; this allows the system to react quickly before a large number of defective cars continue down the line, which would then require a costly production to be processed.

To be successful, the employees need to know and accept the organization's overall mission, as well as to be aware of what its current situation is, so that they can take the right actions, which is the essence of the first corporate culture characteristic of the resilient organizations – continuous communication among informed employees. In addition, they must have the power and orientation to take action and, moreover, to be rewarded for their initiatives and not to be penalized for wrong steps when under pressure.

Similarly, some retailers are much more flexible and faster than others to meet the inconsistent demand of fashion clothing consumers. The Japanese retailer World and the Spanish Zara need only three weeks production lead time (compared to the industry average of six to eleven months) and it takes a total of six weeks for them to introduce a new product (compared to the industry average of one to two years), and also managed to turn their inventory ten times a year (compared to the industry standard, which is six times). An important component in their success is the empowerment of product development, production and marketing teams so that they can cope with the challenges immediately and without headquarters approval. Managers from these departments meet every day to plan their response according to daily sales data from the stores. They have the power to change the product design in order to respond to sales trends and solve the shortage of goods.

When Southwest Airlines faces the problem of paying tens of millions of dollars per year for the use of the computerized reservation systems of the major international companies, their competitors in fact, Herb Kelleher decided to develop Southwest Airlines own electronic system (Kelleher, 1997). It turns out that people from several departments have already gathered, they have taken into account the situation and have already been working on a system, without even Kelleher or the other Southwest Airlines leaders to know about it. Such an initiative is an example of how the empowerment principle works, which includes anticipating the crisis, taking action without asking for permission, bringing together a group of experts and working on a solution. This is possible precisely because Southwest Airlines culture encourages and rewards such an attitude.

Similarly, within high-reliability organizations to take responsibility is encouraged, which allows decisions to "migrate" together with problems. According to Kareva, when decisions are needed, they depend not so much on the organizational structure or the hierarchical rank, but on the expertise and the experience. As a result, a wider range of options and solutions are available to overcome a wider range of issues (Kareva, 2019).

In his book on World War II, Stephen Ambrose states that part of the superiority of the US Army is rooted in the empowerment of soldiers to make decisions on the ground (Ambrose, 1998). In the complex situation of the battle, he said, the senior officers had no clear idea of the battlefield, and neither the Americans nor the Germans were prepared for some of the cases. Advantageously, the US commanders of the battle units are on the move to take the initiative and improvise. His argument is that, as a whole, the German army is rather commanding and controlling and, as a result, reacts too late or inappropriately to the changing conditions and requirements of the battlefield.

Similar is the concept of the East for the governance, where it is believed that "the Emperor of All-under-Heaven Empire" must rule "at the will of Heaven" in an indirect but as wise manner" (Ivanov, 2018, p. 107) for which he has rulers and generals – enough prepared for that and sensitive to the changes in the environment (internal and external). Qualities that are set in direct correlation with the third characteristic of a resilient organization, namely passion for the work.

Sheffi concludes that teams trained to morph quickly as the rules of the game change respond better not only to demand fluctuations, but also to unexpected disruptions. In the context of disruption management, hectic environments may actually condition an organization to manage disruptions well (Sheffi, 2005). Examples include Zara's continuously changing product designs, Dell's stretch goals, and UPS's continuously exposed operations. These environments help "sensitize" employees to the demands imposed by the high-impact disruptions.

Passion for the Work

Flexible organizations have yet another common element that usually underlies the values and corporate culture. This element is the personal, deep-rooted concern and responsibility to work for the company, called passion for the work. This type of attitude towards work may still be defined as urgency, alignment, or mindfulness[3]. The notion of mindfulness refers to the corporate culture of high-reliable organizations such as airline companies, nuclear power plants, and others. For them, the culture and the climate of safety are of a key importance and are a subject to an in-depth research regarding the role of the technical, human and organizational factors (Kareva, 2016).

In the private sector, this dedication and alignment with corporate goals is often promoted by the possibility to acquire shares and other success-sharing mechanisms that synchronize the financial success of the organization and the individual success. 3,500 of the people in Dell own shares from the company and this is a serious incentive to work for the company's success. The UPS has thousands of employees and managers who own stocks, and they actually hold 90 percent of the shares and 99 percent of the voting rights (Kelleher, 2003). However, cash incentives or stocks are not the only or even the most effective way to encourage passion for the work. Many companies provide the option to acquire shares and do not achieve such results, while others do not make it but still they are very flexible and resilient and have employees who are very careful in their jobs. Neither Toyota nor the US Navy give the opportunity to acquire shares to motivate their employees.

Flexible and fast-reacting companies bring employees' interests into a line with the interests of the organization. They seem to succeed in this at a fundamental level – their employees are deeply identified with their company. Such employees fulfill their personal needs when the company succeeds since they are achieving self-actualization in this process (Maslow,

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[3] The term mindfulness is used to describe high-reliability organizations (such as aircraft carriers, nuclear power plants and firefighting crews) by Karl Weick and Kathleen Sutcliff, Managing the Unexpected: Assuring High Performance in the Age of Complexity, University of Michigan Business School Management Series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001).

1970). While the employees of most organizations are looking to do their job well, the members of resilient organizations really take their commitment to this, creating the flexibility and resilience of the organization.

This passion for the work usually manifests itself as a combination of pride and humility. Pride is a part of the belief that the company's business represents a cause and not just a business venture: UPS people truly understand that the packages they deliver are a part of their clients' lives and therefore the packages must be delivered on time. Don Schneider, chairman of Schneider National, the largest truck company in the United States, motivates its employees, stressing that Schneider National is not actually in the truck business. According to him, Schneider works to raise the living standard of its clients and of the nation as a whole by providing a cheap transport service. Since the transport is included in the price of all products, the company brings value to the nation by providing affordable goods. As the CEO of Southwest Airlines says that it is important that the builder understands that he is building a home rather than just laying bricks (Kelleher, 1997). Fleet officers also think about what they do not in the terms of driving big ships, but as a dedication to the nation's defense of sovereignty and freedom.

The other part of the dedication manifested by the flexible organizations is humility. The employees of these companies are never satisfied, always recognizing that they can do better. When a Dell unit got excellent results, Michael Dell says he is pleased ... but not satisfied because they can do more and better. Although such senior managers are proud of their organizations, they are also humble about what they have not yet achieved, knowing they could and should improve.

Andrew Grove, former CEO of Intel, promotes the idea of a so-called "paranoid" culture that constantly seeks threats and potential interference. He proclaims a way of thinking that constantly questions common wisdom and beliefs in order to maintain vigilance against new and evolving threats. Instead of looking at himself as the dominant market leader as he is, Intel follows every move of his competitors and customers and looks after his own future, fearing new competition from unexpected countries. And perhaps because of this healthy skepticism, Intel continues to dominate the industry.

At Toyota, any form of inefficient spending of resources creates dissatisfaction. The company is constantly making efforts to prevent practices that lead to resource spending without adding value: overproducing; wasting time; unnecessary transportation; overprocessing; excess inventory; excess motion of operations and workers; and scrap and rework (Mika and Sensei, 2001). The company disseminates information about inefficient spending of resources internally so that employees and managers be able to focus on what is rather wrong in their business than on the impressive market results of the company. UPS's founder, Jim Casey, calls this combination of pride and humble "constructive dissatisfaction," given the company's striving to constantly improve by saying that "once you decide you're pretty good, you will no longer feel the desire to do something better" (Sheffi, 2005).

Such culture means that employees are treated with respect and are given information and training, yet they are expected to go beyond the call of duty and "go through walls" to achieve corporate goals. Such attitudes not only characterize high-performing organizations

in general, they are likely to be the difference between making it or not making it during a disruption.

Conditioning for Disruption

Resilient organization appear to be conditioned to be innovative and flexible in the face of low-probability shocks and a high degree of impact by being forced to meet often and almost continually "small" challenges. UPS, like FedEx and other carriers, operates a huge network depending on weather, traffic congestion, city construction and many other daily disruptions. Dell operates in the hi-tech industry, subject to widely changing demand patterns, continually introducing new components and a global supply chain where something new happens every day. Intel, in addition to daily business fluctuations, tests additional situations of process uncertainty through simulated shocks and response training, preparing the company for a wide range of possible threats.

Preparedness for shocks develops the culture of the organization and its readiness to respond to the situations that have arisen. The frequency and broad range of "normal" (or simulated) shocks builds a "be prepared for everything" mentality that penetrates the company. Albert Wright, of UPS, defines a quality new state of thinking that is being reached in response to daily interruptions, saying it includes the understanding that shocks are seen as something really normal in UPS.

In this sense, regular, small failures are actually essential to the development of resilience - they allow the system to release and then reorganize its resources. More broadly, resilient systems fail "elegantly" – they apply strategies to avoid dangerous circumstances, detect breakthroughs, minimize and isolate damage, diversify the resources they use, operate with reduced capacity when needed, and self-organize to recover in the event of a concussion. No such system is perfect, in fact it is the opposite. Zolli and Healy make the following analogy: "the resilient organization is like life, unordered and imperfect, but it survives" (Zolli and Healy, 2012, p. 14). Systems that look perfect are often the most fragile, while dynamic systems, which happen to fail from time to time, are actually the most resilient.

In conclusion

These key features of corporate culture stay at the heart of the development of resilience in organizations. Continuous communication between informed employees is a prerequisite for a clear assessment of the actual situation in the organization at a given time and for filtering the important from the minor. Passion for the work is a prerequisite for a careful tracing of the opportunities and threats in different situations. Preparedness to act in turbulent conditions develops the overall capacity of the organization and creates skills for dealing with them by each employee.

In this way, provided with the necessary information devoted to what they are doing and prepared to respond to various unexpected situations, the employees of the resilient organizations are really able to act quickly and adequately on the spot in case of shocks.

That is why they have been delegated power to do so as a fourth element, forming the corporate culture of resilient organizations.

Trained and empowered in this way, the employees located on the periphery of the organization where the challenge first arises, operate on the basis of their delegated rights and support from senior management at the center of the organization. Using this synergy, resilient organizations are able to respond adequately to external pressures and continue to fulfill their primary purpose.

The combination of these four features makes it possible for the organization to respond adequately to changing circumstances on the one hand and also to find niches to perform within which are basically the two main aspects of resilience. The possibility to find a niche is directly related to the idea that depending on the challenge faced by organizations, resilience does not always mean returning the system to its original state. Although some resilient systems really return to their baseline condition after a concussion or radical change in the environment, this is not always the case. It is possible that resistive systems do not have a basic state to return to - they can reconfigure themselves continuously, to make changes in their corporate culture as well and fluently to adapt to ever-changing circumstances while at the same time continuing to do their job.

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