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AGILITY AS A FOUNDATION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE

While characteristic of our new society with its information revolution and its major industrial disruptions (Barrand¹, 2010), digital transformation has caused management modes to evolve, and questioned managers' practices and skills. "Change" is the word most frequently used by leaders and in the media (Belahouel 2013); it also manifests itself through three changes per year per person against 1 before 2000. Moreover, 80% of the products that will be consumed in 20 years do not yet exist (Christensen², 2012). As a result of the ubiquity of the concept, the ways in which people work as well as the expectations of co-workers have changed significantly.

The acceleration of change, the growing need to mobilize more internal actors in order to carry out profound transformations, the increase in expectations for collaboration and the digitalization of organizations and processes are all factors that fully justify the shift from an instrumental management mode (Kanter³, 1992) to an agile management mode stemming from the experiential paradigm (Autissier⁴, 2013).

Thus, the implementation of agile methods appears to be a judicious alternative, but remains a new phenomenon, particularly its application in all company functions and not only in the software development field.

I) Ideological foundation of agility

Initially driven by the desire to free oneself from the notion of individualism, agile management methods have a strong collaborative dimension, in line with the evolution towards the opening of work spaces and the emergence of social networks (Mintzberg⁵, 2004 and 2005).

With the advent of self-experimental thinking, a component of agile, there are no longer work spaces but spaces for sharing, no longer co-workers but communities, and upward and downward communication gives way to propinquity and alternate, transparent modes of communication.

Survival for an organization lies in its ability to be agile (Alberts⁷, 2011) or to develop an ability to cope with change regardless of the circumstances.

The concept of agility applied to management manifests itself in the execution of tasks or projects in an iterative mode via self-organized teams working in close collaboration with end users. In this sense, this concept can constitute a relevant

1 BARRAND, Jérôme. *L'entreprise agile*. Editions Dunod, 2010.

2 CHRISTENSEN, C.M., OVERDORF, M. « *Meeting the Challenge of Disruptive Change* ». *Harvard Business Review*, mars-avril 2000.

3 KANTER R.M., STEIN B.A., JICK T.D. « *The challenge of organizational change: How companies experience it and guide it* ». Free Press New York, 1992.

4 AUTISSIER, David, HOULIÈRE, Sébastien, LANGE, Alexandra. *Penser management*. Éditions Eyrolles, 2013.

5 MINTZBERG, Henry. *Le management. Voyage au centre des organisations*. Éditions d'Organisation, 2^{ème} ed., 2004.

6 MINTZBERG, Henry, AHLSTRAND, Bruce, LAMPEL, Joseph. *Safari en pays stratégie*, 2005.

7 ALBERTS, David S. « *The agility advantage : a survival guide for complex enterprises and endeavors* », Center for Advanced Concepts and Technologies, 2011.

alternative to public management in terms of intelligence, via experiments carried out in a collaborative mode, in line with the notion of room for manoeuvre.

With the development of information technologies, the theory of agile management is developing, without however, until now, finding real practical applications, while remaining very normative. However, we have identified six characteristics that deserve to be tested on field cases to determine the interest, or not, of using such a method to implement organizational solutions in an institution. The literature and research conducted in the field highlight the following characteristics of agile management:

Author(s)	Identified characteristics
Weick, 1993 ; David, 1996	Collaboration: Multidisciplinarity and transversality
Greenberg, 2013	Study of behavior in changing organizations
Barton L.C. & Ambrosini V.	Engagement and cynicism in contexts of change
Kidd, 1994	Proactive and rapid adaptation
Gunasekaran, 1998	Survival and growth
Martin, 1991 ; Larman & Basili, 2003	Iteration: Immediate visibility of the work carried out, rapid correction of issues encountered
Alberts and Hayes, 2003	Robustness, resilience, responsiveness, flexibility, innovation and adaptation
Whitworth & Biddle, 2007 ; Desplats, 2009	Socialization/network logic: "Bonding" between actors, Use of new media
Maitlis, 2005 ; Rouleau, 2005 ; Autissier & Bensebaa, 2006	Internalization/anchoring: Accountability, appropriation of the meaning of the processes conducted
Charles, 2010	System flexibility: Responsiveness and efficiency
Messenger, 2013	Liberalization of leeway: functional governance
Setili, 2014	Experimentation: Testing, acceptance of failure and capitalization
Shaw et al., Sangari et al., 2015 ; Chan et al., 2017 ; Fayezi et al., 2017	Indicators: Characterization of the physical performance of the system

These characteristics make it possible to specify the interest of agile management and to establish the following proposals:

- *Sense-making* and social processes

Agile management is first and foremost a social process that emphasizes the behavior of individuals (Whitworth & Biddle⁸, 2007) and is carried out according to the psychological factors of their motivation (Robert⁹, 2007) given the importance of integrating intuitive processes into rational decision-making (Quinet, 1994). In addition, it must be meaningful (Maitlis 2005; Rouleau, 2005; Autissier & Bensebaa, 2006) for the people who experience it, otherwise they will not adopt the appropriate behavior to ensure the success of the work.

- *Collective mind* and experiential approach

Agile methods promote collaboration and interaction between people within an ecosystem, resulting in better performance for a given organization (Weick, 1993). Moreover, they are based on the experiential approach achieved through the organization of participatory workshops and the sustainability of the collaborative mode within and outside the strategic projects of an organization (Vandangeon, 2015).

- Risk management

Agile management is an excellent method to build a reactive risk management system, from "market agility" to "implementation agility" (Setili, 2014). Indeed, agile methods highlight the importance of performing tests and providing rapid feedback on the work being done and demonstrate that this operation makes it possible to reduce the costs associated with the late discovery of anomalies (Berczuk, 2007).

8 WHITWORTH, Elizabeth, BIDDLE, Robert. « *The social nature of agile teams* ». IEEE Computer society, 2007, p. 26-36.

9 ROBERT, Jocelyne. *Organisations et changements en entreprises : approches historique, théorique et pratique*. Ed. de l'ULG, 2007.

- Decentralization of power and "room for maneuver

The *Information Age* has seen an exponential acceleration of change and an inevitable shift from "Command & Control" principle to an interoperable and agile management mode (Alberts & Hayes, 2003). The increase in the degrees of freedom or the liberalization of leeway (Messenger, 2015), a fundamental concept of agile methods, fosters initiative and is a catalyst for intrinsic team motivation.

The theory of agile management is not a simple reaction to change, but corresponds to a movement of self-organization, where the human factor component is essential to its successful completion. It is therefore also a question of identifying the available know-how and achieving buy-in and involvement of the personnel of the organization concerned.

II) Cognitive organization for high degree of resilience and reliability

Recent experiences in companies have demonstrated the limits of hierarchical structures and the weakness of majority functioning. The concept of "organized cognition" (Weick¹⁰, 1979) establishes the link between the structural model of an organization and the social interactions between individuals. The behavior of individuals within an organization defines the nature of these social interactions and thus the degree of flexibility of the organization in question.

For an individual, understanding his or her existence and mission within an organization is the decisive factor towards *organizational reliability* (Weick, 1979).

Reconciling the control of individuals' behavior with the maintenance of a stable structural model is the key to a sustainable organization and thus to achieving a high degree of resilience and reliability (Hollnagel, Journé & Laroche¹¹, 2009).

This implies knowing and considering the behavioral maps of the agents more thoroughly, in order to be able to reinvent the processes according to the situation, in other words, it implies considering the assembly of independent actions as sequential cycles rather than as a continuous chain of actions producing the same effects. Focusing more on behavior also makes it possible to identify, and sometimes anticipate, the relationship dynamics between individuals, and more simply of individuals taken separately.

Understanding and taking into account the mental representations of individuals within organizations, their beliefs, preferences and perceptions of the various realities, helps optimizing the change processes of the organization concerned.

New leader profiles are needed, leaders acting more as representatives at the service of the organization's management (Bédard, 2008) and oriented towards greater efficiency and satisfaction. An interesting maneuver consists in associating human factors with growth factors in the way one accounts for an organization's success.

The point is to be able to predict or select the types of personalities corresponding to the needs and culture of the organization, as well as to promote teamwork and productivity (Allport & Odbert¹², 1936).

III) The *collective mind*, a source of resilient performance (Weick¹³, 1993)

The concept of "*collective mind*" (Weick, 1993), or collective, collaborative spirit, is implemented through three key elements: contribution (human exchanges), representation (each person acts and causes other people to act within their own ecosystem), and subordination (interweaving of each person's actions with the ecosystem). More precisely, the concept of "collective mind" is developed to explain the performance of organizations in situations requiring continuous operational resilience. This concept is modeled, like attentive interactions within a social system. Increased attention to and understanding of social interactions between individuals in an organization reduces the occurrence of errors within that organization.

Academic reflection on collective mental processes is still poor, despite the work already conducted on the concept of "social cognition". Reconciling concerns on the study of *individual cognition* with organizational theory of is a particularly relevant avenue, as studies on the individual are not rife. The term "*mind*" is defined as the propensity to act in a certain way (Ryle, 1949).

10 WEICK, Karl E. « *The social psychology of organizing* ». Addison-Wesley, 1979.

11 HOLLNAGEL, Erik, JOURNÉ, Benoît, LAROCHE, Hervé. Fiabilité et résilience comme dimensions de la performance organisationnelle. *Management*, 2009, vol 12, n° 4, p. 224-229.

12 ALLPORT, Gordon W., ODBERT, Henry S. « *Trait-names : A psycho-lexical study* ». Harvard Psychological Laboratory. Psychological Review Company, 1936.

13 WEICK, Karl E. « Collective mind in organizations: Heedful interrelating on flight decks ». *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1993, vol. 38, p. 357-38.

This idea can be assimilated to the concept of "*collective mind*", based on the principle that if the attention given to a group is expressed through concrete actions, it contributes to establishing a particular dimension of social interaction between the person giving this attention and the group concerned. Taking up the three variables discussed above, the fact of contributing, representing and subordinating are actions that inevitably constitute a bond of their own with any individual and, in so doing, the medium through which the *collective mind* manifests itself. If the concept is materialized by social activity interactions between individuals and if it is developed more or less according to the degree of attention given to these interactions, the challenge is to define and evaluate the causes of a variation in this degree of attention.

The notion of "social process" (Mead¹⁴, 1936) must be understood here as a means for an individual to extract a particular meaning from the interactions they have in the context of social activity before reintroducing them according to their understanding and perception within the system. This process of interaction, or interactive process, is repeated over and over again, regardless of the individuals involved.

The greater the degree of attention given to an individual, the greater their capacity to express themselves, to share and to be part of a collective, and therefore their ability to be agile.

IV) Creative trust fosters the development of a resilient culture (Kelley¹⁵ , 2014)

The central point of creative confidence is to believe in one's own capacity to change the world around us (here the environment in which the individual concerned evolves). It is about being convinced that one can achieve the project one has designed. It is this belief in an individual's creative ability that is at the heart of innovation (Kelley, 2014). Creative confidence can be built up and maintained through effort and experience. Creativity is a much broader and more universal concept than what is commonly referred to as the artistic field. It can be defined as the use of imagination to create something new in the world. It comes into play whenever there is an opportunity to generate new ideas, solutions, or approaches (Kelley, 2012). Creative trust is a way of experiencing the world that generates innovative approaches and solutions, and in this way, *design thinking* can be described as an agile method in its experiential and iterative dimensions unique to the ideation and prototype process of *design thinking*.

When individuals transcend the fears that hinder their creative energy, all sorts of new possibilities open up. Instead of being paralyzed by failure, they see every experience as a learning opportunity. Some remain in the project planning stage because they need to control everything. Combining this function of creative confidence with the notion of creative thinking (Buzan¹⁶ , 1971) allows people to structure ideas and to gain greater shared assimilation of the connections and semantics between multiple concepts without needing to resort to the abstraction and scope of a written explanation. It is interesting to draw a portrait of the participants' perceptions of a given theme.

Through creative confidence, they are more willing to accept uncertainty and are then able to take action (Weick, 1993; Maitlis, 2005). Rather than resigning themselves to the status quo, or to what they have been asked to do, they feel free to express what they think and to question the way things are done. They are more courageous and persistent in the face of obstacles - *reliable performance* (Weick, 1993).

When an organization fosters confidence in its personnel, and gives them the means to express the extent of their creativity, that personnel will already add value within the design management processes and be more willing to be long-term members of the organization, improving both its efficiency and its resilience.

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14 Becoming Mead : The Social Process of academic Knowledge.

15 KELLEY, David, KELLEY, Tom. « *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All* ». HarperCollins Publishers, 2014.

16 BUZAN, Tony. « *An Encyclopedia of the Brain and Its Use* », 1971.