CHANGING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THROUGH CLEAR LEADERSHIP

Gervase R. Bushe Ph.D.
James O'Malley

IN L. CARTER, R. SULLIVAN, M. GOLDSMITH, D. ULRICH & N. SMALLWOOD, (EDS.)
THE CHANGE CHAMPIONS FIELD GUIDE (2ND ED.). NY: WILEY, 2013, 463-479.

In this chapter, we will describe a model that not only explains why efforts to create more collaborative organizations so often fail but offers an integrated, research based set of skills for leaders at all levels of organizations to sustain partnerships. We'll describe how starting with the partnership skills and behaviors amongst the CEO and the executive team is the best, and perhaps only way, to create the cultural platform for all the other productivity and innovation enhancing changes 21st century businesses rely on. We illustrate this through the case of Palomar, a health care provider in southern California with $2.5 billion in annual revenues, which was able to increase employee engagement from the 61st percentile to the 91st percentile of US hospitals, and in the process significantly change their organizational culture.

It's an old saying amongst change professionals that organizational change is often something the tops tell the middles to do to the bottoms. And it is equally well known that if the middles are at all successful in changing the bottoms, sustaining change will eventually require the tops to change as well. Organizations are systems, after all, and a significant change in any one part will require changes in other parts. If the tops don't change in response to new conditions and expectations coming up from below, inertia takes over and one more failed change program goes to its grave. Maybe more change can happen more quickly if we start with the tops.

It's equally well known amongst anyone in business that organization design and leadership require revolutionary changes. We've been talking about the need to flatten hierarchies, create teams, empower and engage the workforce for decades now, but the experience of most people is that the good old command and control organization is still in place. Very recently LRN commissioned the Boston Research Group to survey 5,000 American managers and workers to study how decisions get made. Tellingly, 24% of C-suite respondents said their organizations were characterized by collaborative relations where employees could and did make significant

decisions. Only 3 % of everyone else said that was true where they worked[1].

Just about every significant organizational innovation of the past 30 years, from lean manufacturing to agile software development, requires this shift in organizing from command and control to collaboration, or as we define it in this chapter, "partnership". **We define partnership as "a relationship in which all parties feel responsible for the success of their mutual endeavor".** The most popular explanation for why so little sense of partnership exists in our corporations is that the tops are control freaks who don't want to let go of power. That might explain some of it, but clearly not all of it. Certainly not that 24% of C-suite members in LRN's study. In our experience, most people want to work in partnership. They want to feel that the people they work with, their boss, their colleagues and their employees, feel mutually responsible for the success of what they are doing together. It's not a motivation problem. We think it's mostly a skill problem.

But it's also a cultural problem, because the way people act toward each other, and the way people lead in any organization, is shaped by organizational culture – the set of expectations people have for how things are around here. In trying to change leadership behaviors we've learned that every organization has a leadership culture – the way people expect leaders to act. Even if you teach people new skills they have to feel it is OK, even expected, for them to act in those new ways. If you want to change how people show up as leaders you have to both change their skills and the culture they operate in at the same time.

WHAT STARTED AT PALOMAR HEALTH AND WHY.

In 2004 Michael Covert was hired as CEO of Palomar Pomerado Health (now Palomar Health). He had a track record of running much larger health care organizations but was excited by the vision the Board had of creating one of the most innovative health care organizations in North America. Armed with a mandate to build a new, state of the art hospital, Covert began building his managerial team and began the process of changing the culture and operation of the organization.

One of the early issues he identified was a need to change the complacent, inward focused culture in the organization. A survey using the Organizational Culture Assessment developed by Bob Quinn and Kim Cameron at the University of Michigan confirmed that Palomar Health had a predominant "Clan culture". Descriptions of managerial meetings at the time were that everyone was "nicey nice". People would support each other even when they didn't agree with one another. There was an unwritten agreement that no one would do anything that would make another person uncomfortable or feel

[1] The How Report: Rethinking the Source of Resilience, Innovation and Sustainable Growth. LRN Corporation, 2011.

challenged. Front line staff tended to focus more on serving themselves than serving customers. Covert wanted to change the organization from a Clan culture to a Market culture, one that would be more innovative, willing to use constructive conflict to bring out the best in each other, and more client focused.

James O'Malley was hired to run leadership and organization development 4 years later, in 2008. James had a background as a hospital administrator and later as an OD consultant. He also was attracted by the mission and vision and the opportunity to create transformational change, anchored by a new hospital that would be built and occupied by 2012. He saw the challenges Palomar Health faced in shifting from a clan culture to a market culture and believed change had to happen at the top for change to happen throughout the system. He also identified a history of doing "flavor of the month" leadership development – programs that would leave people feeling good but not last or make any kind of difference. His goal was to integrate organization development with leadership development in a way that would disperse across the organization and make a real difference.

The general sense among executives was that people wanted a skill set that could help them work more effectively across the leadership team. More collaboration, make better decisions, work through conflicts effectively and create real alignment. O'Malley thought Clear Leadership[2] was what the organization needed but knew he would have to create high level support to bring such a program into Palomar Health. So he invited a diagonal slice of 18 people, from executives to shop floor supervisors to a one day assessment of the model and training. That group enthusiastically endorsed organization wide adoption of the program. As it turned out, that was critical for getting the executive team to commit to the 4 day training, and to be the first group to receive it, even though there was considerable resistance, even from the CEO.

THE CLEAR LEADERSHIP MODEL: WHY WE DON'T LEARN FROM OUR COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE IN ORGANIZATIONS

Most partnerships start off with everyone thinking "this will be great". Most executive teams begin with members excited to be a part of it. But over time stuff shows up that no one expected, so they have to be able to learn from their collective experience. The widespread conception of how that happens is that a discussion of the recent past results in decisions about what to do in the future. The fatal flaw in that conception is that everyone had a different experience. **Though most of us are taught to think of experience as coming from the outside in, psychology and neuroscience shows fairly dramat-**

[2] Gervase R. Bushe, *Clear Leadership: Sustaining Real Collaboration and Partnership at Work*. Boston: Davies-Black, 2009.

ically that experience mainly comes from the inside out.

We each create our own experience and therefore, people involved in the same event can have very different observations, thoughts, feelings and wants about that event. For example, someone we'll call John can have very different impacts on different people. One person can find him amusing, another can find him annoying, a third can find him creative while a fourth finds him weird. So who created each of those experiences, John? Of course each of the people interacting with John created their own experience of him. So the next question is, who had the right experience? **In a real partnership, each person's experience is equally valid.** The Clear Leadership model proposes that learning from experience does not require agreeing on the right experience; it is mainly about understanding the variety of experiences in the partnership.

But in organizations, when a group of people try to learn from their experience, a subtle (or not so subtle) struggle ensues over who had "the right" experience. At work it's obvious who had the right experience – the boss did – at which point the natural move is to say "OK, boss, you are in charge, tell me what to do". After that happens a few times, any sense of shared responsibility dies and the leader is left wondering how come his team doesn't seem so engaged or concerned. We think this process is the hidden killer of collaborative organizations. **Learning new skills for leading how people learn from experience is required to sustain partnership at work.**

Because we learn to interact with each other based on the assumption that we are responsible for each other's experience, and there is a right experience, people are cautious about describing what their experience really is. We don't want to make others defensive or feel challenged so we learn to hedge what we say, and how we say it. We learn to adopt facial expressions and stances that hide our real thoughts and feelings. We think that doing so will maintain good relationships and protect us from other people's reactions. But it actually does the opposite.

ON TOP OF THAT, WE MAKE UP STORIES ABOUT EACH OTHER'S EXPERIENCE

The problems that arise from a lack of understanding of what experience is, and how to learn from it, are exacerbated by a second reality of the human mind – we are sense-making beings. People are compelled to make sense of others and situations that are important to them. When there is any ambiguity people make up stories about other people's experience – what those others are observing, thinking, feeling and/or wanting, to fill in the gaps of what they know. In most organizational environments, people don't check out their stories, particularly their sense-making about those with more power. Instead, they seek out trusted third parties and together, they make up a story that works for them. Future acts of sense-making have to fit

with past acts of sense-making or things "don't make sense". **Once a story about a person or group gets created, it becomes difficult to dislodge.** One big problem is that people forget they are operating from stories and come to believe their stories are "the truth". The second big problem, due to normal neuro-cognitive functioning, is that ambiguity breeds caution and the tendency to perceive threat when none exists. As a result, the stories that get made up are almost always worse than the reality. I don't get a timely response to emails so I make up a story that the other doesn't respect me, or care about this project, or is unmotivated. Actually, they really do care about the project and respect me. There's a more benign, understandable reason I don't know about because, wanting to remain diplomatic, avoid conflict, or not bruise any sensitivities, I don't bring it up.

The resulting "interpersonal mush", where people are making up stories about each other and acting on them as if they are the truth, is so endemic and widespread that most people don't even notice it, or they assume it's a natural state. Yet once it's named everyone acknowledges its existence and agrees that it is deeply detrimental to organizational functioning.

Because of the nature of human experience and sense making, over time the mush becomes increasingly toxic and has a number of common, negative consequences. For example:

- Organizations fracture into small groups of people who sense-make about other parts of the organization together and so organizations become composed of multiple sub-groups with competing fantasies of what is "really going on", all of which are inaccurate.
- Leaders don't hear about the negative experiences people have of them and they don't hear about the stories people are making up about them. As a result they have little real understanding of the impact of what they do and say and over time become less and less able to lead.
- Official forums of organizational decision-making become a "front stage" where people act for the benefit of various audiences, keeping what they really think, feel and want (their real experience) for back stage discussion only. As a result, what appear to be agreements and shared decisions aren't really.
- People in partnerships lose interest and motivation to continue their partnership.

All of these consequences of interpersonal mush wipe out the capacity for real collaboration and for groups of people to engage in successful planning and implementation of change.

EXECUTIVE TEAMS CAN HAVE THE MOST MUSH

In executive teams the problems of learning from experience and sense-making are exacerbated by the natural dynamics that plague all executive groups. First of all, those

who have good interpersonal skills in command and control organizations and rise to the top have learned to use behaviors that increase the mush. Keep your emotions in check, don't let people know what you really think until you are ready, be diplomatic, smooth conflict over, control the agenda and be persuasive – these are all critical skills for operating in the mush. In the command and control organization, the point isn't to clear out the mush and get real – there are too many conflicts built into the very design of such organizations. The point is to keep a lid on all the conflict and get stuff done in spite of the competing goals, mixed messages, unclear priorities and inter-group rivalries this form of organization creates.

In partnerships, which depend on real engagement from each partner, those "interpersonal skills" are deadly. Instead, people need to be able to get conflict out in the open, uncover the real level of alignment or lack thereof, get clear about what everyone really thinks, feels and wants, and clear out the mush. Leaders of collaborative organizations need to create a climate where people describe what is going on in them and get curious about what is going on in others so they can learn about and manage the variety of experiences in the group. And leaders, of course, are the people others most need to make sense of (unless they are irrelevant). **Leaders only have two choices: (1) they can tell people what their experience is or (2) people will make it up.** If leaders want to reduce the mush and create the climates of clarity required for partnership and collaboration to flourish they have to go first and model being descriptive of their experience, and being curious about the experience of others, without anyone's experience being "right".

Secondly, the natural method for handling the speed and complexity of issues executive groups face is to parcel out responsibility for discrete objectives. An executive group couldn't possibly deal with it all as a group. But as each executive focuses on his or her sphere of responsibility, they become more distant from each other. They become less aware of each other's experience and so have to make up more stories. Wanting to avoid unnecessary conflict, executives feel unwilling to say what they think about issues in other people's sphere of influence. As the interpersonal mush between executives grows, it becomes more naturally negative, over time turning toxic. Not only does that kill partnership between executives, but the conflicted relationships get played out between their respective organizations. We have a number of examples not only of conflicted groups mirroring the conflicts of their leaders, but of inter-organizational conflicts dissolving when the leaders clear out the mush and fix their partnership with each other.

Research conducted by professors and students at Simon Fraser University consistently indicates that about 4 out of 5 conflicts between people in organizations are due to stories they've made up about each

other. Clear out the mush, understand each other's experience, and the conflict goes away. The higher up the food chain clearing out the mush takes place, the bigger the impact on the organization.

THE EXPERIENCE OF CLEARING OUT THE MUSH AMONG EXECUTIVES AT PALOMAR HEALTH

In 2009 the first Clear Leadership course was run at Palomar Health and included most of the 16 member executive team. The CEO began the course unhappy at spending so much time at a "command performance" as he put it, but by the end of the first day his attitude had changed. He saw that this was a model that could pull his team through conversations they avoided and could help with decision-making and keeping commitments.

By the end of the second day of the course each executive had experienced two "learning conversations", (a key technique taught in the course for clearing out the mush) with other executives and they were sold on the process. Over the ensuring two months, before the second two days of the course took place, many of the relationships among executives were significantly improved through learning conversations that were mediated by members of the OD group. Issues that had been swept under the table got aired and resolved.

Dynamics within the executive team changed dramatically and some of that change has to be attributed to the leadership of Covert. He was very clear about his values and expectations for clarity and real partnership. He deliberately role modeled his use of Clear Leadership and continues to be consistent in his willingness to be vulnerable and go first. His one-to-one learning conversations with his direct reports were highly effective. It gave them a safe way to talk about awkward and difficult things. It helped people strengthen their relationships and get to a deeper level of understanding of each other. In a few instances it altered a decision, but that wasn't the objective; it increased trust, collaboration and partnership. For a lot of people it gave them a framework so they could have a say and make sure Covert knew what their experience was. Covert even taught the principles to the Board and began using some of the tools and language in his interactions with the Board.

Team members were now willing to describe their different experiences to each other without being afraid that it would create conflict or hard feelings. Whenever interpersonal mush got thick in a meeting, Covert would say "I think we need to walk the cube" (a Clear Leadership tool) and he would physically get in the middle of the room, between the tables, and use the experience cube to clarify his experience. Other executives would do the same, leading to rapid clarity on what the issues really were. With a new common language to talk about issues people could clearly and assertively say "this is what I want" – people didn't need to guess anymore. Decision-making was more direct, the information was clearer, and there was a

better understanding of where people were coming from. When people violated decisions others were more able to call it – much greater accountability now exists among team members. Prior to that a decision was never a decision; it was just "where we are on this decision right now".

However, it was not all a panacea. In a couple of instances learning conversations revealed that the two executives did not have the motivations or shared values to be in effective partnerships. **Partnership can only flourish among people who want to be in partnership** and the Clear Leadership tools can't change that. In one instance, an executive who was poorly connected to the group and the organization and did not value the collaborative culture that others did, soon left the organization.

MOVING IT DOWN AND CHANGING THE ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE

After the executive team course, a program of 4-day Clear Leadership courses for about 28 participants every 3 months began, first with the most senior managers and working on down the hierarchy. Within 6 months there was enough of a critical mass of trained senior leaders that the language and tools from the course started to be used at management meetings. Communication, decision-making and alignment all improved. Numerous learning conversations took place between managers to clear out the mush and in most cases this led to improved partnerships though in a few it moved them farther apart due to value differences.

By the second year the language of the course became commonplace amongst managers. Some of the tools were used at organization wide planning sessions. Coaching programs and other training integrated the tools and language. Use of the tools began to appear in places the OD group had nothing to do with. Managers began to get impatient when they perceived a person or level not using the Clear Leadership process or skills. It became a "cultural annoyance" to run into a part of the organization where clarity had not taken hold. Sometimes this annoyance got expressed through emails sent to the OD group – all of which they took as a sign that it was really taking hold in the culture. Managers who had avoided taking the course got curious and wanted to learn more and felt behind if they didn't have it.

One very notable difference was in the ability of the organization to handle conflict more effectively. Prior to the program there tended to be poor communication between executives and the "director" level and widespread tendency for each level to blame the other for organizational problems. Through using the tools to increase clarity, they got past blaming individuals see the systemic issues causing their problems. By the third year, however, the increased clarity and communication between these levels also led to poor performing Directors being much more visible. Lack of achievement on targets and commitments were now clear, and this has led

to a greater number of Directors being let go or reassigned than at any other time anyone can remember.

As this article is being written, Palomar Health is transitioning to their new, state of the art hospital, incorporating numerous innovations in patient care. The Clear Leadership model has become fully integrated into the language and processes of the organization. Press Gainey and Associates' "Employee Partnership Survey", which is used extensively by US health care organizations to assess their employee engagement, shows an extraordinary leap in employee engagement at Palomar Health. In the spring of 2011 Palomar ranked in the 61st percentile in their overall engagement score. In the spring of 2012, Palomar had a higher score than 90% of all other health care organizations in their sample.

THE CLEAR LEADERSHIP MODEL IN MORE DEPTH

If we each create our own experience and everyone is having a different experience than the process for learning from our collective experience, managing conflicts, making decisions that have real, shared commitment, is clearly more complicated than first appears. First of all, **experience needs a common definition.** The Clear Leadership model offers the "Experience Cube" as that common definition. This model proposes that experience only happens in the moment (right here, right now). Memories of experience are important determinants of behavior, but are open to the biases and flaws of memory.

Learning from experience is more likely to occur when experience is examined right here, right now. The experience cube also proposes that:

- Experience is composed of 4 elements – observations, thoughts, feelings and wants
- That at every moment every person has observations, thoughts feelings and wants
- However, people differ in how aware they are of different elements of experience and how quickly they can access that awareness
- Everyone can learn to become ever more aware of their experience.

THE EXPERIENCE CUBE

Walking the cube is a tool is frequently used at Palomar Health. At first, a representation of the cube was put on the floor using masking tape. One or more people would talk about their experience while standing in the part of the cube they were talking from. At one large

manager's meeting, a large cube was taped to the floor and everyone got up and stood together in each of the quarters and talked about their experience of a common problem. First everyone described their observations, then they all moved to thoughts, and so on. This allowed for clear collective themes to be understood for the first time and was a powerful, large team building process. More recently, Palomar Health had a rug made with the cube woven into it that sits on the floor of a large meeting and conference room. Having it there makes it even more likely that managers will suggest someone "walk the cube" when things are mushy and unclear.

CREATING A CLIMATE OF CLARITY REQUIRES LEADERSHIP MATURITY

The principles for sustaining partnership at work are simple: check out your stories, be honest to yourself and your partners about your experience, be curious and respectful of your partners' experience, look for and amplify the best in your partner. This sounds pretty simple, and in practice it is. But it's not easy and we think we know why. It has to do with how we are taught to manage anxiety in relationships. These strategies make it impossible to clear out the mush and learn from our collective experience.

There are two basic ways people manage relationships to avoid anxiety. Both enable the interpersonal mush. One is to take responsibility for other people's experience and hold them responsible for one's own. In this strategy, a person makes sure to not say anything that they think might cause the other person discomfort. In turn, they expect the other to talk and act in ways that show "sensitivity". A leader who feels responsible for her subordinate's experience will try to change what that person thinks, feels or wants, so that the leader can get rid of the anxious feeling in herself. Over time the follower learns what is OK and what isn't OK to say and the stuff that isn't OK to say goes into the mush. This dynamic is why people say one thing in meetings, and then say something very different when they get together with trusted others. **Until people are willing to say what they say to trusted others, in meetings, you don't have real partnership.**

The other way to manage anxiety is to not notice other people are having an experience. By not considering or being curious about the experience of others, you don't have to take them into account. Again, deadly to partnership and learning.

The solution requires leaders to stop taking responsibility for the experience of others (which, of course, they really aren't since everyone creates their own experience) AND stop making other people responsible for the leader's experience. People are responsible for what they do and the results they achieve but they aren't responsible for the leader's experience of it. The leader creates his own experience.

It also requires that leaders stop being disconnected from the people they lead. It requires the emotional maturity to be "self-differentiated", that is, the ability to be clear about one's own experience and willing to be straight about it (what I observe, think, feel and want) but at the same time be curious about and inquire into the experience of others without being emotionally hi-jacked.

Only self-differentiated leaders can create a "climate of clarity", where people are encouraged to describe their experience. Such a climate requires some key shared assumption[3] (another definition of culture): 1) everyone creates their own experience and therefore 2) no one is responsible for another person's experience and 3) everyone will be having a different experience. This approach is based on the observation that people learn from their collective experience, and real collaboration is sustained, when the variety of experiences are allowed voice and no one thinks it is their job to change or fix other people's experience. This will only happen if people are not afraid of describing an experience that will get their leader angry.

Creating such a climate of clarity requires leadership and as with all acts of leadership, they require courage and vulnerability. **To create a climate of clarity, where people are willing to describe their own experience and understand the others' experience, leaders have to be willing to go first in being descriptive and they have to be willing to be seen learning publically**. Learning publically means being curious about the experience of others, encouraging people to describe observations, thoughts, feelings and wants that are different from the leaders and acknowledging differences without getting defensive or making the other's experience "wrong".

The Clear Leadership model identifies four key skill sets that can be easily demonstrated and learned that support self-differentiation and are essential for clearing out the mush and sustaining partnership.

1. The ability to be aware of one's in the moment experience
2. The ability to describe experience without categorizing and judging others. This is not about being "open and honest", it is about being skillfully transparent.
3. The ability to notice when one is getting reactive and choose, instead, to be curious. This is about learning to notice when one is getting emotionally hooked, be able to park that reaction, and instead of trying to change the other's experience, simply trying to understand it.
4. The ability to identify and align with the positive intent in others, to understand

[3] Gervase R. Bushe, Sense-making and the problems of learning from experience: Barriers and requirements for creating cultures of collaboration. In Shulman, S. (ed.) Creating Cultures of Collaboration, (pp.151-171). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.

that everyone is the hero of their own story and that most of the time, from their vantage point, whatever they are doing and saying is the best they know how.

While these skills are very useful for anyone who wants to work collaboratively with others, we believe they are essential leadership behaviors to create collaborative workplaces and effective change processes.

CHANGING LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS IS AS MUCH ABOUT CHANGING THE CULTURE AS IT IS ABOUT CHANGING INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR

Every organization has a leadership culture – a way leaders are expected to act. **Changing how leaders act requires more than just teaching them new skills and attitudes, it requires a change in the leadership culture itself.** This is a chicken and egg problem as changing culture requires people to act differently and getting people to act differently requires changing culture. The Clear Leadership approach, which is well illustrated in the Palomar Health story, assumes that the leadership culture of an organization is created and sustained by those with the most authority and therefore, they have to go first in visibly changing their behavior. Most fundamentally leaders need to lead learning in the midst of performing, and they need to be seen learning publically. It's only when we see our leaders actively seeking out disconfirming information, opening up about their experience and being curious about the experiences of others, inviting people to voice different experiences, that we conclude "Oh, around here, being a learner is part of leadership".

The Clear Leadership approach to transformational change involves the following steps:

1. A high intensity, 4 day developmental learning experience for the executive team (broken into two, 2-day workshops) in which they learn the Clear Leadership skills, use them with each other, and develop a commitment to changing their behavior to align with the Clear Leadership model.
2. Ongoing coaching and facilitation of organizational learning experiences amongst executive team members. Opportunities for them to voice their commitment to these changes to others in the organization.
3. A water-falling set of 4 day Clear Leadership courses starting with the most senior managers and cascading down the managerial ranks.
4. Half and full day events where large numbers of managers gather to discuss organizational issues while utilizing the Clear Leadership skills. Clear displays of leaders learning, and opportunities for the variety of experiences around key issues to be expressed.
5. Integration of the Clear Leadership model and language into other human resource processes, training, and operational processes.

6. Short training programs based on one hour increments for front line workers in the Clear Leadership model.

Summing up 20 years of studying organizational change and development, Harvard professor Michael Beer recently concluded, "The development of an effective organization requires honest (the unvarnished truth about the system is revealed), collective (a critical mass of key stakeholders inside and outside the organization), and public (what is learned and actions taken is known to everyone) conversations about the alignment of the organization with the senior team's espoused strategy and values."[4] But, he notes, a key criticism of his SPF change method is that it does not increase the capability for managers to have those conversations. As the Palomar Health case illustrates, Clear Leadership may well be the answer to creating those capabilities and a culture that supports them.

[4] Michael Beer, Developing an effective organization: intervention method, empirical evidence, and theory. In Shani, A.B., Woodman, R.W. & Pasmore, W.A. (eds.) *Research in Organizational Change and Development, Vol. 19 (pp. 1-54)*. NY: Emerald Group Publishing, 2011.

Gervase R. Bushe (pronounced Jervis Bush) is Professor of Leadership and Organization Development at the Beedie School of Business, Simon Fraser University, in Vancouver, Canada (one of the top 50 management research universities in the world). He is an award winning researcher and author in the areas of leadership, teamwork and organizational change. His research has focused on two areas: transformational change processes, and the design and leadership of collaborative organizations.

His research and consulting go hand in hand. With over 30 years of experience as an organizational consultant, he has helped companies change their cultures, redesign their structures and processes, transform employee relations and improve leadership effectiveness. He works with executives to increase teamwork and architect transformational change processes. Past clients include SAP-Business Objects, Shell Oil, Canadian government, General Motors, American Airlines, Fraser and Vancouver Island Health Authorities, Telus, Novellus, Johnson Controls, BC Research Corp., Credit Suisse, and the Vancouver School Board.

He is also the president of Clear Learning Ltd. and the developer of the models and teaching methods in all of Clear Learning's courses. Gervase has an extensive background in the design and delivery of highly experiential management training programs that significantly improve manager's ability to lead people and facilitate change and has consulted to organizations on the design of complete, in-house leadership development processes. He is highly rated as a speaker and workshop leader. His courses are led by certified facilitators in Canada, the US, Europe, Australia and Asia. For more information visit www.clearlearning.ca.

James O'Malley has been the Learning and Development Officer at Palomar Health, a public healthcare system in Escondido California, since 2008. Palomar Health is a multi-hospital healthcare system that covers an 850-square mile area and is the largest hospital district in the state of California. Palomar Health boasts a full spectrum of health services, with state-of-the-art hospitals, birth centers, rehabilitation and long-term care centers, home health care and hospice services. In his role, he has facilitated the building and execution of a shared vision for organizational learning. He has driven innovation and integration of learning and culture transformation across their healthcare system to support key strategic initiatives and organizational challenges. He has served as a key strategic partner providing comprehensive support to the development of leaders to enable them to effectively develop engaged employees and build high performing work-teams.

Prior to his work at Palomar Health, from 1996-2008 he served as the Principal at The O'Malley Consultancy Group, a European based healthcare organizational development and management consultancy practice that works with individuals and organisations across the European Community.

In addition to his consultation work in Asia, Europe and North America, he has held senior level nursing and healthcare executive positions in the United States within community hospitals, academic medical centres, and multi-hospital systems. He holds numerous faculty appointments and is a frequent contributor to nursing and healthcare literature. He serves as an editorial board member on multiple leadership and health care publications in Europe and the United States.