KILIAN BENNEBROEK GRAVENHORST

STERKE STAALTJES VAN SAMENWERKING

**SURVEY-FEEDBACK VOOR
HET AANPAKKEN VAN BELEMMERINGEN
BIJ ORGANISATIEVERANDERING**

KLUWER

SUMMARY

Strong cases of cooperation. Survey feedback for working on barriers to organizational change reports a study of far-reaching changes in medium-sized organizations. Problems frequently arise during processes of change. Such problems lead to results that were not planned and often new change processes start before previous ones are properly finished. This study investigates why organizational change is difficult and what could be done better. In addition, a method is developed that can be used to support change processes.

Goals

The five goals of this study are:

1 To assemble knowledge of problems experienced during change processes into a coherent overview of barriers to organizational change.
2 To examine perspectives of different stakeholders with respect to their organization and the change processes.
3 To investigate the relationship between change approach and effectiveness of change processes.
4 To contribute to an effective approach towards change processes.
5 To develop a method by which stakeholders can analyze and discuss their change processes, with a view to increasing process effectiveness.

Research Questions

The four central questions in this research are:

1 What barriers occur in far-reaching change processes and how are they related?
   Special attention is given to the question to what extent do line-managers form a barrier to change?
2 What are the differences in stakeholder perspectives with respect to their organization and the change process, and what possibilities exist to align these perspectives?
   Special attention is given to the issue of whether similarity in perspectives is related to the level of support for change.
3 How is the approach to a change process related to the effectiveness of that process?
   Special attention is given to the question whether the behavior of change managers is related to the proceedings of the change process that they lead and facilitate.
4 Under what conditions does survey feedback contribute to a change process?
   Special attention is given to opportunities that may result from exchange of perspectives between different stakeholders.

Research Method

The study consisted of a broad literature search and six extensive case studies. The literature search focused on organizational change processes, interventions, and barriers to change. In the cases studies, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data. Interviews and questionnaires provided insight into the functioning of the organizations and

the proceeding of the change processes. Results were fed back to the people in the organizations.

The case studies in the six organizations were set up in a similar way. A cooperative research project started with interviews to provide an insight into the organization and the change process to be studied. Barriers to change were examined with the questionnaire 'Change in Organizations' that was developed for this study. All members of the organization received a copy of the questionnaire. People gave their opinion about 79 statements referring to six aspects of their organization and ten aspects of the change process. Negative responses to the statements were considered as barriers to change, while positive responses were considered as factors contributing to the success of the change process. After analyzing the general results, the perspectives of different stakeholders were examined. In most case studies, the perspectives of top managers, line-managers, and employees were compared. During the feedback of the results, the opportunities to enable these stakeholders to exchange perspectives were investigated. The change approach was described by eleven characteristics that indicate whether a design or a development approach is being followed. The effectiveness of a change process was evaluated by examining the responses to the ten aspects of the change process measured by the questionnaire and the extent to which they form a barrier to change.

The plan for the survey feedback in the first case study consisted of five steps:

1 The top management is involved in the planning of the survey feedback.
2 Data are collected from all members of the organization.
3 Results are fed back to the top management and then down through the hierarchy (i.e., via line-managers) to the teams.
4 The researcher assists line-managers with preparing the meetings with their teams and may also be present during the meetings (i.e., as a resource person).
5 Line-managers discuss the results with their teams and make plans for improvement and constructive change.

This plan was further developed and adapted for the remaining case studies. Reflection on the procedure and its effects played an important role in the development of the survey feedback method. Special attention was given to the role and position of the researcher-consultant in changing organizations.

Theoretical Starting Point

Organizing

This study combines organization theory and intervention theory. Open systems theory leads to a focus on the relationship between an organization and its environment. A fit between the internal organization and demands from the environment is important for the effective functioning of the organization. Within an organization different components or aspects can be distinguished such as: goals of the organization, strategy, structure, culture, technology, and people. Additionally, an organization is viewed as a political system in which different groups and individuals pursue their own interests. The combination of the open systems view and the view of organizations as political systems results in attention for the functioning of an organization within its environment, its interrelated components, the behavior of groups, and political relations in organizations.

Changing

Extensive change usually starts as a result of tension between the demands of the environment and the existing way of organizing. There are different ways to conduct change processes. Two contrasting approaches are the design approach and the development approach. A few characteristics of the design approach are that top managers strongly influence the change process, and that a standard method is being followed to obtain pre-defined goals. A few characteristics of the development approach are that top managers, line-managers, and employees work together in the change process, methods are adapted to the operation of the change process, and initially general goals are specified along the way. Extensive change processes are started deliberately and are orientated towards specific objectives. In planned change, five phases can be distinguished: entry, diagnosis, goal setting, change, and evaluation. Change agents are the people who lead and facilitate the process of change in organizations. Leading change involves setting the context, translating ideas into workable plans, and realizing changes. Facilitating change involves paying attention to the progress of the change process and determining whether or not interventions are required.

Interventions

Interventions are activities that directly or indirectly aim at organizational improvement. There is a vast choice of available interventions. Intervening in organizations is a complex issue that involves a balanced choice for a specific intervention, structuring of activities, and consideration of sequencing intervention activities. Using questionnaires or organizational surveys is a well-known intervention. Survey feedback is a specific way of working with questionnaires. This intervention combines systematic data collection through a survey with feeding back the results to stakeholders in an organization. The goal of the feedback is that members of the organization take action and start working on resolving problems and issues that were exposed with the survey.

Barriers to Change

Literature research results in an extensive overview of barriers to change and factors contributing to the success of change processes. The division in aspects of an organization and aspects of a change process is used to classify barriers to change and success factors. Six aspects refer to organizations: goals and strategy, structure, culture and leadership, technology, work, and political relations. An example of the first aspect (goals & strategy) is that unclear organizational goals are considered as a barrier to change. Clear organizational goals are considered as a contributing factor. Ten aspects refer to change processes: goals of the change, technology, tensions, information supply, timing, creation of support, role of the change managers, role of the line-managers, outcome expectation, and support for the change. An example for the final aspect (support for the change) is that lack of willingness to contribute is considered as a barrier to the change. When members of an organization are willing to contribute to the change, this is considered as a factor that contributes to success.

Together, the sixteen aspects indicate an organization's capacity for change. Examining the barriers to change and success factors for a specific organization shows what runs well and what runs less well in a change process. A graphical display of the results gives an orderly

sketch of the situation. In the example below it can be seen that problems occur mainly in the current organizational status. The majority of people judge the change process positively, and want to contribute to the achievement of the changes.
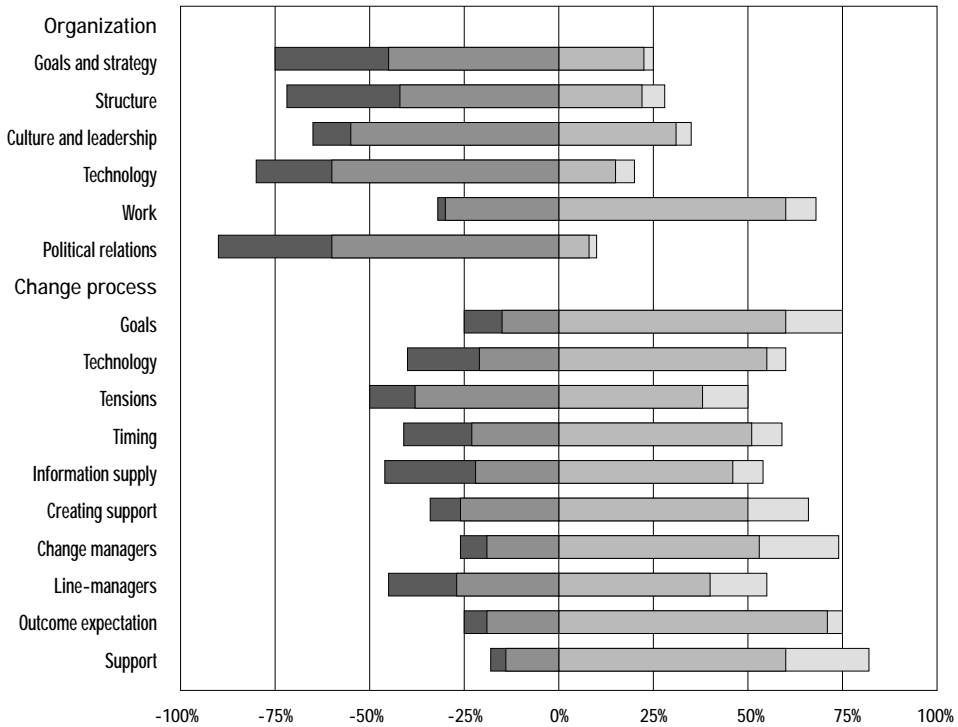
Six Organizations Involved in an Extensive Change Process

Each case study starts with a description of the organization and the change process. Subsequently, the start of the cooperative research projects is sketched. The main part of a case report consists of a presentation of the survey results, an interpretation of the outcomes, the chosen way of working with the survey feedback, and its effect on the change process. At the end of each case report, I indicate how the cooperation was ended and I describe the follow-up conversations about the case report that took place approximately two years later. Special sections in the case descriptions are used for reflections on researching changing organizations and working with survey feedback.

Integration of Two Insurance Companies

Two insurance companies merge to form a new company that insures risks from other companies. The central elements in the integration process of the two insurance companies are structural and cultural change. The research highlighted five important barriers to change: lack of clarity concerning the goals and strategy of the company and regarding the goals of the integration process, tensions within the organization and a focus on group and individual interests, criticism of the conduct of top managers and line-managers, minimal attention to creation of support,

and technology as a problem in the organization and in the integration process. The most important success factors were optimism about the outcome of the integration, high-level of support for change, a positive judgment of the work, and a new CEO who forced a breakthrough in the previous standstill situation. Unit managers, team managers, and employees held different perspectives on their organization and the integration process. Unit managers and employees had negative thoughts concerning the organization, whereas team managers were more positive. Unit managers had more positive thoughts about the integration process, whereas team managers and employees were more negative. The integration process followed a design approach. This approach to change is related to low process effectiveness: almost seventy percent of the stakeholders had negative opinions regarding the integration process.

The survey feedback was partially completed. Three important methodological insights arising from the case study are the need to: clarify mutual wishes and expectations regarding the survey feedback early in the cooperative project, transfer ownership of the research to people in the organization, and discuss outcomes with stakeholders before making written reports. These insights were incorporated into an adjusted plan for the survey feedback in the next case study. The survey feedback did not strengthen the integration process in this case, because the feedback of results barely reached employees and discussions between different stakeholders did not take place.

Focusing on Demands of Clients in a Care Organization
A care organization provides services to people with mental or physical disabilities. The central element in the change process is to focus on the demands of clients instead of focusing on offering a set of services. The research pointed to three significant barriers to change. People criticized the information supply and communication within the organization, the top-down style of management, and the limited amount of time available for the changes. The most important success factors were the positive expectations of the outcome and the high level of support for the changes. The majority of people were positive about the conduct of the organization. Comparison of perspectives of line-managers, team coordinators, and employees demonstrated that these groups evaluated the change process in different ways. Team coordinators evaluated the change process positively, whereas employees were negative. Line-managers took an in-between position. Implementation of the changes largely followed a design approach. This approach is related to relatively high process effectiveness: more than fifty percent of the stakeholders were positive about the change process.

The more refined early stages of the survey feedback helped in transferring ownership of the outcomes of the survey to the management team and line-managers. An important methodological insight arising from this case study is that managers need to express an intention to discuss the results of the survey in their teams at the start of the intervention. This is considered a condition for success of a survey feedback. Other insights are that it is useful to devise an intervention plan in collaboration with line-managers, that the procedure for distributing and returning the surveys deserves close attention, and that interpretation of the results together with managers contributes to the quality of the intervention.

Changes in a Youth Detention Institution

In a youth detention institution teenagers from the ages of twelve to eighteen learn how to function independently in society. The changes carried out in the institution are intended to improve and develop the organization. They originate from internal policy and from Central Government policy. The research showed three main problems with the institution: lack of clarity about the goals of the changes and how to attain those goals, severe criticism regarding the constant changes and the short amount of time available for realization of these changes, and lack of opportunities for employees to participate in them. The management team was criticized for the way it led the changes. The most important success factors were the strength and determination of people to realize improvement and change, despite the difficult situation. Positive also was the fact that the management team was aware of the problems and sought effective solutions. Comparison of the perspectives of the management team, line-managers, and employees revealed that these groups had different ideas about the organization and the change process. The management team had positive opinions about both. Line-managers held negative views about both, while employees mainly criticized the change process. Remarkably, some members of the management team had no clear idea about the goals of the change. Line-managers were united in their criticism of conduct of the management team. It is not clear which change approach was followed because there was no clear plan, method, or practice. This lack of a clear approach to the change is related to low process effectiveness: almost seventy five percent of the stakeholders had negative thoughts about the change process.

The adjusted plan for the survey feedback from the previous case study provided a workable basis for intervention. Not all steps were completed in this case study. This was mainly due to the outcomes of the survey, which revealed that the situation could only begin to improve after the management team and the line-managers had undertaken first measures together. A remaining question is whether or not survey feedback is a suitable intervention in such a situation. The contribution of the survey feedback to the changes in this case study mainly consisted of clearly demonstrating the problematic situation in the institution. Following this, a number of drastic actions were taken and things changed for the better.

Change within a Government Detention Institution

In a second youth detention institution, juvenile delinquents also receive treatment. The institution was founded in 1995. Two years later, a change process started, aimed at improvement and development of the organization. The research isolated five important barriers to change: the timing of the change process, little attention for creating support, lack of clarity about the goals of the change and how to attain them, tensions within the organization, and the top-down management style. The change manager, line-managers, and employees differed in their perspectives on the situation. The change manager was positive about the organization and the change process, whereas employees were much more negative. The opinions of the line-managers lay between those of the other two groups. The changes were mainly realized by a design approach. The design approach is related to relatively low process effectiveness: sixty percent of the stakeholders were negative about the organizational changes.

In this case study, all steps of the survey feedback were completed. The case study did not

lead to adjustment of the steps. Positive experiences with the survey feedback supported the previously developed way of working with the intervention. An important difference from the previous case studies was that the line-managers from the detention institution had discussed the results of the survey with their teams. A central issue in the feedback-sessions was the limitation of the design approach that was followed. Subsequently, the teams started to think about ways to make the improvement and development of the organization a more collaborative effort. Important insights are that it is useful to assemble the outcomes of each feedback session, and that time and attention is needed for follow-up actions after the survey feedback.

Working Professionally and Organizational Improvement in a Care Organization
Another care organization provides services to people with mental disabilities. A change process began following a merger in 1995. Central elements are the offering of professional care to clients and improvement of the organization. The research showed five important barriers to change: the high speed and high number of changes, little attention for creating support, lack of clarity about the goals of the change and the ways of attaining them, criticism of the conduct of the management team in the change process, and of the conduct of the line-managers. The most important success factors were that the organization runs well, that people have high expectations of the outcome of the changes, and the level of support for change is high. Comparison of the perspectives of the management team, line-managers, and employees revealed differences among the opinions of the three groups. The line-managers thought most positively about the organization, followed by the management team and the employees. The management team had positive thoughts about the change process, whereas the employees were more negative. Line-managers took an in-between view of the change process. For the most part, a design approach was followed to realize the changes. The design approach is related to a low process effectiveness: two-thirds of the stakeholders were negative about the changes.

Experiences from the previous case studies were incorporated into the plan for the survey feedback. In collaboration with the management team and the line-managers, new ideas were generated allowing further refinement of the step-by-step way of working with the intervention. In this case, a preparatory group was formed that devised a plan for giving feedback to the teams. The feedback-sessions were structured using a set of questions. Reports from the sessions were distributed to all teams, and the management team responded to the outcomes of the sessions. The survey feedback contributed to an overturn in the change approach. Both the results of the survey and experiences with the intervention started the exploration of more collaborative ways of working on and realizing changes. Satisfaction with the survey feedback process in this case made me consider if it would be possible to go beyond the developed step-wise plan for working with the intervention. I propose an alternative plan without a central role for managers so that the intervention would become a more collaborative project from the outset.

A year later, the organization requested a second survey feedback. The new research demonstrated that considerable progress had been made, since there were no longer any serious barriers to change. The perspectives of the management-team, line-managers, and employees were more similar than the year before. The approach to the change had shifted from a design

approach to an approach with more development characteristics. The more collaborative way of working on the changes is related to higher process effectiveness: at this point, fifty percent of the stakeholders were positive about the change process.

The second time, the method of working with survey feedback was fully adjusted to the situation in the care organization. The plan for the intervention was made in cooperation with the management team and the line-managers. Line-managers took the lead in the survey feedback. This was aided by their experience with the intervention and a more developmental approach to the changes. Each line-manager discussed local problems and issues with his team. My role changed. In the former cases, the focus had been on doing research and completing the five steps. In this case, I had been focusing on facilitating the survey feedback and coaching people on how to gain maximum benefit from the outcomes.

Organizational Development in a Re-Insurance Company
A re-insurance company takes on risks of insurance companies and pension funds. Central elements of the change process are working towards a flexible and profitable organization where work is enjoyable and specialists effectively contribute to the results of the company. The cooperation in a project began before the start of the change process. Following entry and an extensive orientation phase, a collaborative diagnosis took place in which the management team, line-managers, and employees examined the situation in their organization. The diagnosis showed that problems and issues were related to the mission and strategy of the company, the structure and throughput processes, technology, management, culture, and personnel policy. For each of these themes, a general direction for improvement was worked out. Exploring solutions started with a conference that almost all members of the organization attended. Subsequently, so-called theme groups were formed that elaborated upon the proposed solutions. Among other things, this led to a profound change in the structure of the organization.

Barriers to change and success factors were examined shortly after the start-up of the new units and teams. The research did not show important barriers to change. Still, attention to the completion of the other changes was considered as important. Success factors were that a majority of the stakeholders positively evaluated all aspects of the new organization and the change process. In addition, almost every member of the organization expected a positive outcome and therefore support for the organizational development process was high. The differences in perspectives of the management team, line-managers, and employees were small and each group thought positive about the organization and the changes. The approach to the changes was mainly developmental. This approach is related to a high process effectiveness: two-thirds of the stakeholders thought positively about the organization development process.

In this case study, the way of working with survey feedback was unlike the other cases. A stepwise procedure was again followed, however, each of the steps was performed differently. The main difference was that managers did not play a central role in the survey feedback. The management team, line-managers, and employees worked together in a collaborative effort to improve and change the organization. Therefore, the survey feedback could also be a joint project of the three groups. Since there were no big differences in perspective on the organization and the change process, results were specified for each team in the organization. The new units and teams discussed their particular results and added ideas for improvement

to the newly-made team plans. The other way of working with survey feedback shows that it is possible to do a survey feedback without a central role for managers, that line-managers can facilitate the discussion of the results in their teams, that specification of results for each team gives an appealing impression of the local situation, that feedback of the results without interpretation transfers ownership of conclusions to teams, and that the step to action is easier than in previous case studies.

Answers to the Research Questions

Barriers to Change

Barriers to change are mainly found in the change process and not in the organization. Five groups of interrelated barriers to change are: (1) not enough time or resources for change, (2) insufficient information and communication about the changes, (3) little attention for creating support, (4) tensions within and between units and teams, and (5) the conduct of management teams and the approach to change they choose. The conduct of line-managers is not a problem in the case studies: there is no indication that points to line-managers resisting change or resistance to change due to line-managers. The most important success factors are: (1) the positive expectations people have of the outcomes and (2) their support for and commitment to the changes.
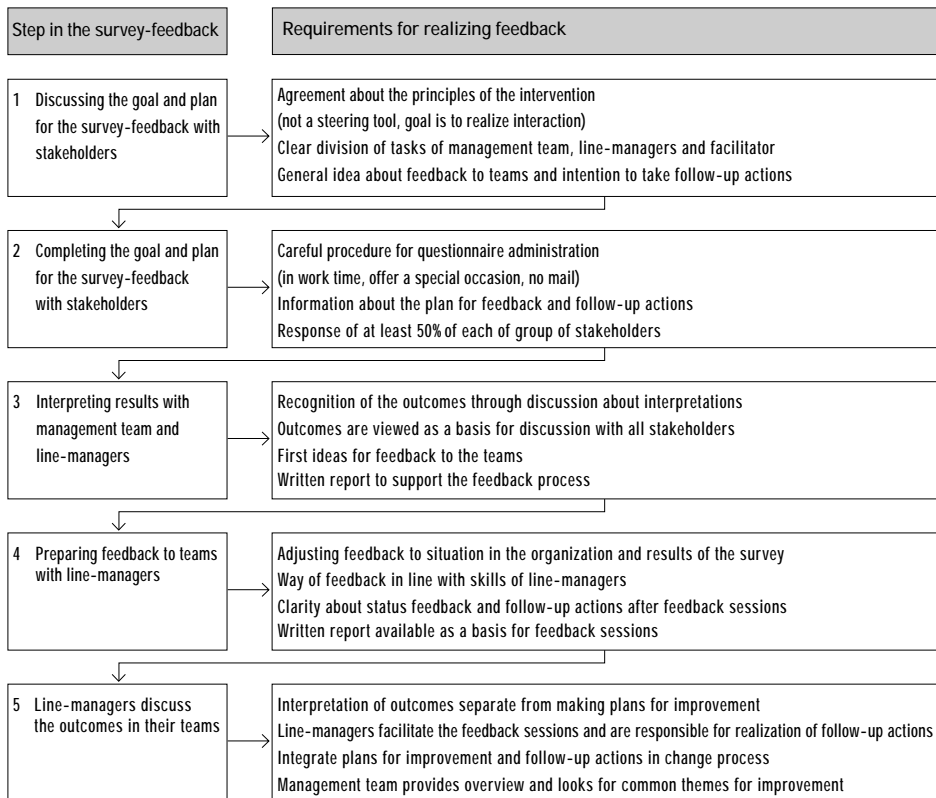
Differences in Perspective

Each of the groups involved has its own perspective on the organization and the change process. Members of the management teams think positively about the situation in the organization and about the change process. Employees are moderately positive about their organizations and hold negative opinions about the change process. Line-managers tend to think less positively than members of management teams but more positively than employees. No relationship is found between similarity in perspective of the groups and level of support for the changes. The particular ways of thinking of the three groups is related to their position and role in the changing organizations. In the case studies, the management teams perform a strategic role. They initiate and lead the changes. The line-managers fulfill the role of implementers and are responsible for translating the changes into their units and teams. The employees are the receivers of the changes. In most cases, their role is to carry out the instructions of the management teams and line-managers.

Process Effectiveness

Design approaches are related to low process effectiveness. Development approaches are related to high process effectiveness. Many barriers to change occur in processes where a design approach is being followed. In the case study where the design approach shifts to a more developmental approach, criticism of the approach diminishes. Hardly any barriers to change occur in the case study where a development approach is followed from the outset. Process effectiveness is also related to the conduct of the change managers. In cases with low process effectiveness, change managers receive a lot of criticism. The criticism focuses on the way change managers communicate about the changes and their top-down management style.

Using Survey Feedback Effectively

Three conditions for the effective use of survey feedback to strengthen a change process are: (1) agreement with the management team and the line-managers concerning the plan for the survey feedback and the principles of the intervention, (2) completion of each of the five steps (a survey feedback is incomplete without feedback to the teams), and (3) facilitation of the intervention with the intention that the members of the organization can carry out follow-up actions. Elaboration of these conditions is illustrated in the figure below.

Step in the survey-feedback	Requirements for realizing feedback
1 Discussing the goal and plan for the survey-feedback with stakeholders	Agreement about the principles of the intervention (not a steering tool, goal is to realize interaction) Clear division of tasks of management team, line-managers and facilitator General idea about feedback to teams and intention to take follow-up actions
2 Completing the goal and plan for the survey-feedback with stakeholders	Careful procedure for questionnaire administration (in work time, offer a special occasion, no mail) Information about the plan for feedback and follow-up actions Response of at least 50% of each of group of stakeholders
3 Interpreting results with management team and line-managers	Recognition of the outcomes through discussion about interpretations Outcomes are viewed as a basis for discussion with all stakeholders First ideas for feedback to the teams Written report to support the feedback process
4 Preparing feedback to teams with line-managers	Adjusting feedback to situation in the organization and results of the survey Way of feedback in line with skills of line-managers Clarity about status feedback and follow-up actions after feedback sessions Written report available as a basis for feedback sessions
5 Line-managers discuss the outcomes in their teams	Interpretation of outcomes separate from making plans for improvement Line-managers facilitate the feedback sessions and are responsible for realization of follow-up actions Integrate plans for improvement and follow-up actions in change process Management team provides overview and looks for common themes for improvement

Survey feedback stimulates management teams, line-managers, and employees to exchange perspectives about the situation in their changing organization. Feedback of the results promotes communication about the changes within and between the three groups. Specification of the results for each group shows in what sense the groups differ in their ideas about the organization and the change process. Interaction about the differences contributes to mutual understanding and to finding solutions for existing problems.

Survey feedback can be used as a management tool for steering and as a learning tool for all stakeholders involved. As a steering tool, survey feedback has little effect. The perspective of managers remains central and the design approach to change continues. When used as a learning tool, survey feedback has a substantial effect. The focus is then on exchange of perspectives, learning together, and viewing change as a collaborative effort. Using survey feedback as a

learning tool may lead to a shift to a more developmental change approach. In an organization development context aimed at joint learning and changing, survey feedback is a suitable intervention for diagnosis and for monitoring the change process.

Realizing effective survey feedback requires knowledge of survey research and expertise in facilitating the intervention. Facilitating the intervention asks for a degree of involvement in the change process that is absent in academic research. In applied research and in action research the researcher-consultant develops a relationship with people in the organization. This relationship allows for a customized plan for the survey feedback and for a critical examination of the organization and the change process together with the management team and line-managers. At the same time, distance is needed to examine the results from an external perspective and to transfer ownership of the outcomes to the organization. Survey feedback primarily asks for a facilitator role, extended with research expertise.

Learning and Changing with the Use of Survey Feedback

What Makes Changing Organizations Difficult?

The first general conclusion of this study is that realizing far-reaching change in organizations is difficult when insufficient attention is given to the approach and proceedings of the change process. Management teams usually follow a design approach by which the top of the organization steers by way of fixed goals. Few possibilities exist for contributions from other stakeholders. Separate roles of the management team, line-managers, and employees result in differing perspectives on the change process. Usually, the management team works on its own change process, sometimes assisted by line-managers. The potential contribution of employees is not being used. The management teams believe their design approach works well. The line-managers are less positive than the management teams, but more positive than the employees. Employees criticize almost all aspects of the change process in their organization, especially the top-down implementation of changes, the limited amount of time for the changes, the restricted availability of resources for realizing changes, the lack of dialogue about the change approach, and the insufficient stimulation of communication and exchange of ideas. These are essentially criticisms of the conduct of the management teams. The conduct of line-managers does not form a barrier to change. The top-down implementation style occurs in the existing organizational hierarchy (line-structure). This is complicated, because realization needs to take place in a short time and with few extra resources. Change processes are rarely monitored along the way, which results in a limited view of the proceedings of these processes.

Elaboration of this conclusion follows five themes. Firstly, the limitations of the design approach to change are discussed. As a result of this approach, proposed solutions are poorly recognized, not accepted, insufficiently worked out, or considered unattainable. A small group of people is responsible for devising what others must do. Stagnation occurs when the solutions are transferred. Secondly, indications that support the choice of a development approach are considered. The change issues are suitable, people in the changing organizations want to contribute, resistance to change does not occur, and a development approach hardly leads to barriers to change. A third theme is the differences in perspective of the three groups. Bringing together these perspectives is important for creating a common understanding of the problems, solutions, and realization of the changes. This asks for a conscious striving for

interaction, discussions, and communication between groups and individuals. A fourth theme is the importance of paying attention to the processual dimension of change. In a so-called change organization, change tasks and process responsibility are assigned to specific persons. They ensure that time and resources are made available for the change, they realize progress, and they monitor the proceedings of the process. Fifth and finally, further research is proposed. This research may focus on organizational processes as barriers to change, the reasons for choosing a certain change approach, as well as the way of assessing the change approach, and the relationship between process effectiveness and outcome effectiveness.

When Does Survey Feedback Contribute to a Change Process?
The second general conclusion is that survey feedback contributes to a change process if three conditions are met. Firstly, the principles of the intervention need te be discussed with the management team and line-managers and a working plan for the survey feedback has to be made. Secondly, the completion of each of the steps of the survey feedback is important to ensure feedback at the team level. Following the accompanying detailed stepwise procedure promotes the effectiveness of the feedback. Thirdly, facilitating the intervention is needed to complete the steps and to realize plans for improvement that are made during the feedback sessions. Line-managers play a central role in the survey feedback. Thus, a connection is ensured with existing steering processes in the organization. In certain situations it is possible to make the survey feedback a collaborative project of managers and employees. Facilitating the intervention asks for a process role. Facilitating mainly aims at transferring ownership of the intervention to people in the organization, and at achieving commitment to improvement of the change process and follow-up actions. Survey feedback is especially effective when the intervention is used as a learning tool for the whole organization. The intervention is less effective when used as a steering tool for managers. Working with survey feedback strengthens a change process in four ways. Firstly, it highlights what runs well and what runs less well in an organization and its change process by following a systematical procedure. Secondly, the results are fed back to all stakeholders. Thirdly, groups in an organization are stimulated to discuss the outcomes and their own perspectives on the situation. Finally, the feedback creates a starting point for taking action on exposed problems.

Elaboration of this conclusion follows five themes, along with a discussion of six dilemmas that are relevant for professional use of survey feedback in change processes. The first theme is the principles and effects of the intervention. The aims of survey feedback are that groups and individuals in an organization learn to understand each other better, improve their communication, obtain more information about the changes, and cooperate to achieve these changes. The key factors are interactions concerning the outcomes of the survey and collaboration in devising solutions for identified problems. One dilemma is whether or not to start with the intervention when a design approach to change is being followed. After all, survey feedback is an organization development intervention. Nonetheless, the intervention can contribute to a shift from a design approach to a development approach. A second dilemma is whether the intervention should be seen as a method or as a methodology. When survey feedback is seen as a methodology, it is combined with other interventions. This puts extra demands on researchers and consultants working with it. The second theme is the classical approach to

survey feedback with a central role for line-managers. An advantage of this approach is that it connects to existing steering processes. An alternative is to incorporate the developmental principles in the early steps of the intervention. Here, a dilemma is whether or not line-managers should be given a central role in the survey feedback. The third theme is the apparent opposition of the expert role and process role in working with survey feedback. Here, a dilemma is whether to focus on doing research or on realizing interaction between stakeholders in an organization. In the former situation an expert role is suitable, in the latter a process role fits. A process role also requires research expertise, yet this knowledge is used in a different way. The fourth theme is the positioning of survey feedback and explicit discussion of the principles of the intervention. Here, the dilemma is whether a survey feedback is positioned as a steering tool for managers or as a learning tool for all stakeholders. The final dilemma is whether survey feedback should be used as a separate intervention or whether the intervention is connected to other change activities. Connection to other activities contributes to the effectiveness of the intervention. The fifth theme is further research on survey feedback. This may focus on the set of starting conditions, follow-up actions, the process role of the researcher or consultant, and improvement of the survey.

The Power of Survey Feedback as an Intervention and Learning Tool in Change Processes
Evaluating the power of survey feedback asks for a perspective on the effectiveness of the intervention. Using survey feedback as a learning tool means that movement is created in the following ways: (1) a systematic examination of the situation within the changing organization involving all stakeholders, (2) a focused discussion of the questions of what goes well and what goes less well with a central role of exchanging different perspectives and interaction between groups and individuals, (3) the formation of a common idea about problems and possible solutions in the changing organization, and (4) the management team, line-managers, and employees commit themselves to realize improvement. It is essential to make sure that proposed actions are subsequently executed. This requires proper planning, that proposed solutions are worked out in detail, and that responsibility is assigned to specific persons. Working with survey feedback means that people in an organization opt for collaborative learning, changing, and steering.

Sterke staaltjes van samenwerking gaat over de vraag waarom verandering lastig is en wat er beter kan. In zes diepgaande case studies wordt nagegaan wat belemmeringen zijn in veranderingsprocessen. Structuur, cultuur of technologie van organisaties vormen meestal geen obstakels. Juist de aanpak en inrichting van veranderings-processen zorgen voor problemen. Een moeilijk vraagstuk voor veel organisaties is hoe mensen samen invulling kunnen geven aan een veranderingsproces. De case studies laten zien dat sommige organisaties beter slagen in gezamenlijk veranderen dan andere en wat de effecten daarvan zijn. Samenwerken in veranderingsprocessen vereist een inspanning van alle betrokkenen. Juist die inspanning zorgt voor resultaat.

In elk van de case studies wordt gewerkt met survey-feedback. Met een vragenlijst (survey) worden de stand van zaken in een veranderende organisatie in kaart gebracht. Tijdens de terugkoppeling van de uitkomsten naar alle betrokkenen (feedback) wordt bepaald wat de betekenis is van die uitkomsten en welke mogelijkheden er zijn voor verbetering. Vervolgens gaat het erom dat mensen zelf actie ondernemen om verbetering te realiseren. Gaandeweg de case studies vindt ontwikkeling plaats in de manier van werken met survey-feedback. Het resultaat is een methodiek waarin gezamenlijk sturen, leren en veranderen worden gecombineerd.

Kilian Bennebroek Gravenhorst is momenteel werkzaam als universitair docent Communicatiewetenschap aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam. Tevens werkt hij voor Sioo, Interuniversitair Centrum voor Ontwikkeling op het terrein van Organisatie en Veranderkunde. Hij houdt zich vooral bezig met management van veranderingsprocessen. Samen met studenten, managers en adviseurs legt hij een verbinding tussen de theorie en praktijk van ingrijpende veranderingen in organisaties.