KURT LEWIN

His Dynamic and Force Field Models in
Contemporary Research, Management and Practice

Two contributions by
Dorothy Stock Whitaker and Galvin Whitaker

Omslagsbildens konstnär

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Som konstnär är Viveca Lundh autodidakt.
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Content

<u>Contribution no 2 by Galvin Whitaker</u>

Preface

Our Swedish network "Reports from the human side of the organisation" holds on the 14th every month a seminar on some relevant issue within the field of the dynamics and the potentiality of cooperation in the working life and has done so since 1987. About 150 companies and organisations, representing both the business world and the common sector, now participate in the network and all employees and members of the organisation are invited to these monthly meetings. Last February we had our first meeting outside Sweden as a part of the International Conference "Kurt Lewin Today" in Milan, which was arranged to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Lewin´s death.

The different papers presented at the conference demonstrated that the dynamic and force field models and also the scientific approach used by Kurt Lewin still inspire and influence the work of both researchers and practitioners all over Europe. However, many of the concepts he elaborated have been so well integrated in the common scientific language that we no longer connect them with Kurt Lewin. A deeper understanding of the scientific tradition that Kurt Lewin followed and how this tradition has been developed after him would show us new ways to support and make better use of the experiences of different professionals in their daily work.

Those from our Swedish network who attended the conference and the following seminar decided to try to promote further conferences on Kurt Lewin to continue the discussions and to collect more examples to illustrate the wide applications of the Lewinian models and concepts both to research and to practice in many professions.

All papers presented at the conference were either written in or translated into Italian and will be published in Italy by the inviting organisation, ARIPS. Dorothy Stock Whitaker, Professor of Social Work at the University of York and Galvin Whitaker, former Director of Organisational Research at the

University of Leeds, were both invited to Milan and asked to give some account of how they came to be involved in Lewin´s thinking. They will now give their contributions to the promotion of another "Kurt Lewin Conference" and to the understanding of concepts such as action research, life space, force field analysis and models by letting us publish their papers from the conference in Milan as "Abonnemangsrapport 61, oktober 1997". Our own paper was made available for our Swedish Network in the report "Abonnemangsrapport 57, December 1996".

Degerfors the 29th of October 1997
SAMARBETSDYNAMIK AB

Monica Hane   Bengt-Åke Wennberg

Action research, life space, and force field analysis: some applications to research and practice in the helping professions

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In this paper I shall give an account of how some of Kurt Lewin's thought and work, related graphical models, and his approach to both research and education/training, have become integrated with planning and conducting research in the helping professions. The account will show how people ordinarily thought of as 'subjects' of research can make a contribution to research planning, how Action Research can be built into research designs and used to collect data; how some Lewinian models — in particular the concept of 'life space', action research cycles, and force field analyses — can be used as aids for understanding complex situations and as devices for reporting what has been learned through research; and how some of these same models can be used for research dissemination and for assisting practitioners and managers to apply research findings to their own unique work situations.

First acquaintance with Lewin's thinking:

I first became familiar with the thinking of Kurt Lewin when a graduate student at the University of Chicago, studying clinical and social psychology. Soon after, I went to Bethel, Maine, as a researcher working in a team directed by Professor Herbert A. Thelen. The groups on which we collected data were T-groups or training groups, which had been invented a few years previously by Lewin and some of his associates. Those whom I met that year and in successive years at Bethel included many who had worked directly with Lewin, either in research or in training: Ken Benne, Ronald Lippitt, Leland P. Bradford, Alvin Zander, Murray Horwitz, John R.P. French, and others. Lewin himself had died early in 1947, but his spirit and his thinking were still very much alive and of continuing influence.

I went back to Bethel year after year, first as a researcher and then as a member of staff, leading T-groups, presenting theory sessions, and participating in the mutual learning which was a hallmark of the Bethel approach to learning about

groups and about leadership.   Along with many others, I continued to use T-groups and force-filed analyses as part of workshop-style learning, in leadership training laboratories at Bethel and elsewhere. This continued through the 50s and 60s, and indeed every since, in various teaching-learning contexts.

During this long period I did not make explicit use of Lewinian models in research, though they were prominent in my teaching.   One could say, however, that the ideas were there, ready and waiting, until such time as I experienced the need for them in research.

An experience with research which led to re-thinking how one might plan and conduct research, and disseminate findings

In the years 1982-84 I had an experience which proved to be a turning point in how my colleagues and I conducted research and which led, in a series of steps, to making use of Lewinian ideas and procedures in research and research dissemination. A colleague, Jean Cook, and I conducted a piece of research titled 'The experience of residential care from the perspectives of children, parents, and care-givers'. We devised parallel interview forms — for the child him/herself, for a parent or other relative, for residential care workers, and for field social workers , and gained permission from a nearby Local Authority to collect data in some of their Children's Homes. The research yielded information potentially valuable to those concerned with children in residential care. When we distributed the research report to the Local Authority which had allowed us access, they thanked us kindly and we heard no more about it.   We never learned whether or not the report was used or even read. As far as we knew, the research had seeped into the sand, and had no impact on practice or policy.

In thinking this situation over, we realized that those in the Local Authority concerned with residential care for children had no sense of ownership of the research, no sense of having participated in it or of having had a hand in its planning, development, or conduct. We had not thought of involving them in any way other than seeking their permission for data collection, and they had not asked to be further involved. This was in keeping with how research was customarily done at that time. Research subjects provided data and were not further involved. The researchers' responsibility ended with the preparation of a final report or a book.

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We came to the view that a sense of ownership amongst those who cooperated with the researchers — either in giving permission to collect data or becoming research subjects — was important if research findings were to be taken seriously by those providing and managing services. In this, we were helped by thinking in Lewinian terms.

Lewin thought in terms of social systems. In the research described above, we had defined the social system we were examining narrowly, focussing on the Children's Homes themselves and those most directly involved. The non-take-up of our research findings suggested that we should think in terms of a wider social system which included the organisation in which the care facility was embedded, and perhaps others whose thinking and actions bore on residential care. Members of staff were regarded as research subjects in that they were one of four categories of people who provided data. We reckoned that they could be involved in the research process in further ways.

The gradual evolution of a 'partnership' approach to planning and conducting research

Over the next ten years, I conducted four further pieces of research, with new colleagues. These were:

> 'The Quality of Life in Residential Homes for the Elderly' (Dorothy Whitaker and Lesley Archer)

> 'Improving and Maintaining Quality of Life in Homes for the Elderly' (Lesley Archer and Dorothy Whitaker)

> 'Supporting Learning-Disabled Adults in the Community' (Dorothy Whitaker, Lesley Archer and Galvin Whitaker)

> 'The Prevailing Cultures and Staff Dynamics in Children's Homes' (Dorothy Whitaker, Lesley Archer and Leslie Hicks)

Each of these took us further in working out means of lessening the likelihood that research, once completed, would not 'seep into the sand'. As we went along, it became evident that some of Lewin's thinking could usefully be built

in to research designs, and into what was done both before and after the actual conduct of a research project.

These further research projects will be described below, in turn, or order to show the evolution of what we came to call 'partnership research'.

Research on 'The Quality of Life in Residential Homes for the Elderly': the introduction of procedures for increasing the likelihood of research findings being used by practitioners and managers

The substantive purpose or aim of the study was to understand better that commonly used but nevertheless somewhat elusive term 'quality of life' — in this case as it pertained to residents and staff members in residential facilities for elderly people. We also had 'process' aims in mind — to so conduct the research as to increase the likelihood that the substantive results of the research would be used in the workplace and by the organisation.

To this end, we sought to gain the commitment of the management of a Social Services Department before designing this piece of research or even settling on a focus for it. This was in keeping with the aim of establishing a sense of ownership of the research on the part of those who necessarily had to give permission for access to data. We got in touch with John Winkler, a key middle manager in a nearby Social Services Department, and in discussion with him identified a number of issues important to the organisation at that time. Lesley Archer and I reviewed these, and two topics were selected as potentially researchable within a reasonable period of time. We then drew up proposals and costs. John Winkler took these to his Directorate, and a decision was made to support a piece of research on the quality of life in Homes for elderly people. We made it a part of the partnership idea to involve someone from the Social Services Department in conducting the research itself, and Margaret Marren joined us as a part-time research associate. Three Homes were selected to participate in the research.

We worked out a three-phase structure. Phase I was preparatory. In it we consulted care workers, so as to have access to their practice wisdom in defining the detailed purposes of the research. Phase II consisted of working out a research design and conducting the research. Phase III was a programme of dissemination and research-utilisation.

Phases I and III were innovative. Phase II was more conventional except that we devised procedures for keeping the cooperating organisation in touch with the research as the work went on.

Phase I consisted of a series of three two-hour workshop meetings with all staff members in each of three residential Homes. The purpose was to provide an opportunity for everyone to express their experience-based understandings of what it is like to live and work in the Home, and to elicit their opinions about issues of particular importance which ought to be examined. This was in acknowledgement that on-the-ground workers knew more about looking after vulnerable old people, day in and day out, than anyone else, certainly more than did the researchers. The workshops provided access to the accumulated practice wisdom of experienced care workers.

In the first workshop, staff members were invited to discuss 'What is it like to work in this Home?', 'What do you think it is like to be a resident in this Home?'. In the second workshop they were asked 'What would you advise, caution, etc. if your son or daughter, or brother or sister was thinking of working in a Home for the elderly? and 'If your mother or father or granny or granddad could no longer manage at home, what would you like to know about a Home before agreeing that they would enter it?' Each time, we wrote up what was said, and checked it for accuracy, the next time we met.   In preparation for the third and last workshop meeting, the researchers drew up a set of questions which expressed the interests and concerns and curiosities of workshop participants, as expressed in the first two workshop meetings. We presented workshop members with these at the beginning of the third meeting, and discussed and checked with them as to whether we had got it right. This was done in all three Homes separately, to in order to formulate a definitive list or research questions, we combined and integrated what had emerged from each of the three staff groups. This combined and adjusted list of questions constituted the detailed research purposes. Of course we showed the list to John Winkler, to whom it also made sense.   Phase I was a framework or structure, and a process.   The framework was devised by the researchers.   The process, contributed to by all, supported interaction, participation, respect for diverse points of view, and serious thought about the nature of the task.

In Phase II — planning and conducting the research — the researchers worked out a research design for addressing the full set of purposes, which now included an overall aim and a number of detailed objectives. To collect data

relevant to these purposes, we devised parallel forms of a Sentence Completion device, for members of staff and for residents. Observations were also carried out in the Homes.

To maintain communication between ourselves and the staffs of the cooperating Homes as the research proceeded, we asked each of the three staff groups to chose one of themselves to be a liaison person, through whom communIcation in both directions could take place. These three liaison persons, plus the three researchers, met at the end of the data-collection period. The consequence of this meeting was the preparation of a letter which was sent to all the staff, bringing them up to date with the progress of the study and answering questions about the research procedures which Margaret Marren and the liaison persons knew were in the minds of some members of staff.

After the research report had been written, a 'Phase III' was conducted, which had to with dissemination and research utilisation activities. A report was of course written and distributed in the usual way. In addition, feedback sessions were held with the three staff groups, a meeting was held with Councillors who were on the Social Services Committee, a training day for residential and other social work staff was conducted, and a paper was presented at an annual meeting of the UK's Association of Directors of Social Services.

This research differed from the previous project in that (1) the overall purpose of the research was arrived at through discussions with management; (2) an employee of the cooperating Social Services Department became a member of the research team; (3) detailed research purposes were identified *after* the experience and practice wisdom of on-the-ground workers could be taken into account; (4) communication between the research team and staff members who provided data was supported by identifying a liaison person in each of the participating Homes; and (5) dissemination of research findings went beyond the preparation of a written report and included meetings with various interested groups, during which interaction and discussion could occur.

The researchers were well satisfied with how the three-phase system had worked, and resolved to retain it in the next piece of research. We also saw the advantages of at least one person from the cooperating organisation joining us in planning and conducting the research, and this too was to be retained. We were less satisfied with the rather rudimentary procedure we had used for keeping in touch with staff groups and providing feedback as the research

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proceeded. The final phase, which concentrated on dissemination and research utilisation once the research proper had been completed, had gone reasonably well. We resolved to include this in our future work and to develop it further.

Research on 'Improving and Maintaining Quality of Life in Homes for the Elderly': taking two further steps: (1) instituting regular communication with interested people from the organisation as the research went on; and (2) making use of Lewin's Action Research framework for collecting data

This next piece of research was a direct follow-up of the first 'Quality of Life' study. We had learned that a satisfactory quality of life consisted in a set of experiences and feelings, for example: feeling pleased with oneself, feeling to be in control of oneself and one's own personal environment, experiencing a sense of continuity of the self. We had also developed an understanding of what contributes to quality of life and how some contributing factors are well-nigh universal while others differ from person to person.

An obvious further question had to do with how quality of life could be improved and maintained. Three phases were again built in to the research process. As before, the actual conduct of the research (Phase II) was sandwiched between a preparatory phase (Phase I) and a dissemination and research-utilisation phase (Phase III).

Structures for maintaining contact with members of the cooperating organisation were developed further than previously. We again involved employees of the cooperating service-providing organisation as part-time research associates. In this case, four organisation-based research associates joined the two university-based researchers. We named this group the 'Project Workers' Team (PWT). Such a group had existed, de facto, in the previous research, but this time we gave it a title, which we considered increased its prominence and visibility in the Social Services Department. We also created a 'Project Coordination Group' (PCG). This group consisted of all members of the PWT plus key people from the service-providing organisation, including unit managers of the seven residential Homes who participated in the research, a representative from each care staff, managers from several layers of the organisation, and
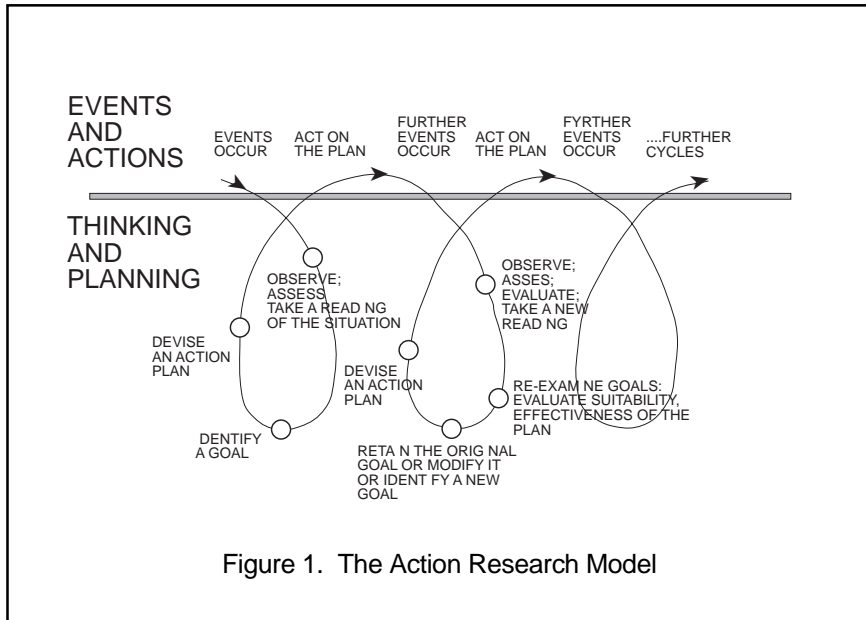
members of the training staff. This group was a 'vertical slice' of the organisation. It brought together people who were not ordinarily in direct communication with one another. The PCG met at about five-month intervals and enabled all those with an interest in the research to keep abreast with how the research was going. It provided regular opportunities for them to state their views and reactions as the research went on. The Project Workers' Team, of course, met much more frequently.

In the research design, we decided to make use of Action Research, as devised by Lewin (e.g. Lewin, 1946, 1947a 1947b). This fitted well with the overall purpose of the research. There seemed no better way to test out how residential care could be 'improved and maintained' than by making use of Lewin's action research model as part of the research itself.

The action research model comprises a series of action research cycles. Each cycle consists of (i) taking a reading of the situation as it now exists; (ii) identifying a specific concrete goal which the practitioner wishes to accomplish; (iii) devising an action plan which seems likely to move the situation towards achieving the goal; (iv) carrying out the plan during an agreed-upon implementation period; (v) judging the consequences (with respect to whether the goal was achieved or not, or partially achieved), and reflecting on the usefulness and appropriateness of the plan and on any unanticipated processes or outcomes; and (vi) initiating another action research cycle. The next cycle in the series might pursue an altogether different goal, or, especially if the first goal was not achieved or not fully achieved, it might involve the same goal but a modified plan, or a somewhat modified goal judged to be more realistic. Sometimes the full consequences of moving through an action research cycle suggest some further, related goal. The action research model is shown diagrammatically in Figure 1.

In this diagram, all that is above the line refers to actions actually taken. That which is below the line refers to think-work on the part of members of staff, which typically occurs in set-aside time for staff discussion.

Our intention was to meet regularly with the staff groups, introduce the model to each group, and encourage staff members to identify goals important to them, to make plans which seemed likely to accomplish the goal, and so on, in line with the model. We did not intend to suggest goals or plans ourselves, but to encourage the staff groups to make use of the model in thinking over what

EVENTS AND ACTIONS

EVENTS OCCUR   ACT ON THE PLAN   FURTHER EVENTS OCCUR   ACT ON THE PLAN   FYRTHER EVENTS OCCUR   ....FURTHER CYCLES

THINKING AND PLANNING

OBSERVE; ASSESS TAKE A READ NG OF THE SITUATION

OBSERVE; ASSES; EVALUATE; TAKE A NEW READ NG

DEVISE AN ACTION PLAN

DEVISE AN ACTION PLAN

RE-EXAM NE GOALS: EVALUATE SUITABILITY, EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PLAN

DENTIFY A GOAL

RETA N THE ORIG NAL GOAL OR MODIFY IT OR IDENT FY A NEW GOAL

Figure 1. The Action Research Model

was important to them and what they wanted to work towards, ~~to~~ make their own plans and ~~to~~ give thought to the consequences of their efforts.

It was agreed that members of the research team would make a series of visits to seven residential Homes, during which they would meet with as many members of staff as could be present. In the first of these meetings, we introduced the idea of action research. All could see the point of it. The first step was for a staff group to discuss together the goals they would like to pursue, and then settle on one of them to work on first. The goals named varied: some had to do with individual residents, some with the resident group as a whole, some with reducing stress or work-load for the staff, some with residents' relatives, some with external managers. Staff groups then worked out plans related to the goal they had named, and in successive meetings with them, the researchers supported them in the remaining steps in the action research cycle. A new goal was then identified.

The action research model was both an aid to practice and a research tool. As an aid to practice, it encouraged members of staff to think explicitly about their

practice and to evaluate the consequences of their efforts. As a research tool, it put the researchers in touch with issues which staff members regard as important to their work, how they go about planning, what might facilitate or interfere with planning or with acting on plans, the full consequences of acting on a plan (not only with reference to the originally set goal but also with respect to additional spin-off effects), and so on. The action research model, in other words, could function for the researchers as a window to the world of residential care for elderly people.

The action research procedure went as intended and hoped in almost all the Homes. However, the staff members in one of seven Homes did not get down to using the model. Visits to this Home revealed that the staff group was greatly preoccupied with a series of crises. These included a salmonella outbreak in the Home, the long-term absence of the Officer in Charge because of illness, re-decoration of the Home which put the kitchen out of commission for a long period, and conversion of part of the building for learning-disabled elderly people who were to be moved from a hospital which was being closed. All of this preoccupied the staff group, complicated the task of caring for the residents, and drained staff of energy. Staff members had identified a goal early on, but work on this flagged and it was many months before they could return to it.

The series of small and large stressors which were present for this staff group made it clear that a reasonably settled working life needed to be in place before time and energy could be given to action research procedures. Indeed, one of the substantive learnings had to do with the importance of reasonable absence of stress in a staff group if maintaining a good quality of life for staff and for residents is to be achieved.

In reviewing this piece of research after it had been completed, the researchers considered that the value of the three-phase structure had been confirmed, as had the advantages of working with seconded members of the organisation as research associates. Using action research methods worked well for all the Homes except one in which the staff had been subjected to unusual stress. On the whole the study showed that action research could at one and the same time be used as a research instrument and as a contribution to staff and programme development. Naming the group of researchers as a 'Project Workers' Team' dignified it and helped to establish its status. The idea of the Project Coordination Group worked well, and we resolved to include it in further

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research. Phase III activities were again worthwhile, though we did not develop any further activities beyond those used in the previous research.

Research on 'Supporting Learning-Disabled Adults in the Community': including attention to management and to organisation dynamics as one of the substantive aims of the research, and adapting the by-now established research partnership model to new circumstances

In some ways, this was a more complex piece of research than the previous ones. In our part of the U.K., care for learning-disabled adults is overseen not by a single organisation, but by consortia composed of the Local Authority and several Housing Associations. How these consortia operated thus crucially influenced the service provided. This research was agreed during a time when large institutions for people with learning disabilities were being closed, and those who had lived in them were being transferred to small group Homes in the community. The Homes accommodated three to eight or so people, and were staffed by care workers who might, or might not, provide night cover, depending on the degree of disability of the residents.

The research design took into account these special circumstances. It was organised into three 'strands'. 'Strand A' focused on direct work with and on behalf of residents in small group homes in the community; Strand B' concentrated on management and organisation; and 'Strand C' on the quality of work-life for staff. Galvin Whitaker joined Lesley Archer and Dorothy Whitaker, and took special responsibility for Strand B.

We will concentrate here on that part of the work which was concerned with the provision of direct care in the small group Homes. — Strand A. Again, use was made of Lewin's Action Research model. Preliminary visits were made to all the Homes to become acquainted and to introduce the idea of Action Research to the staff group, and to make an opportunity for them to select goals they wished to pursue. All the staff groups took to this idea, and had no problem in specifying goals important to them, and in making plans.

Of course, an action research cycle was not always 'successful' in achieving its objective. For example, another staff decided to try to improve dental hygiene for one of their residents, by teaching him how to use a toothbrush.

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John learned about toothbrushes and their use, but brushed his teeth so vigorously that he damaged his gums. Members of staff decided to abandon their first goal and, instead, help him to learn to use a mouthwash. In this they, and John, were successful.

Not all goals had to do with individual residents. Other goals identified by staff groups and worked on, had to do with (for example) seeking to gain the goodwill of neighbours who were worried about learning disabled people living next door; seeking to help residents to work together cooperatively; bringing residents into closer touch with the surrounding community. In every case, a concrete plan was devised. In one Home, helping the residents to learn to work together was done by building a pond in the back garden which could then be stocked with fish. In another Home, residents were regularly accompanied to the local pub for a night out.

In some cases, the residents were brought into the planning process. For instance, a staff group took as a goal going on holiday abroad with a group of residents. Once this goal was identified, residents were involved in planning for the holiday.

As will be evident, we learned more from this research about how the action research model works in practice. In examining the full consequence of having put a plan into action we could see how there were consequences in addition to those associated with the orIginal goal. For example, not only did a successful holiday abroad take place, but residents developed skills in planning on their own behalf; they developed new social skills whilst on holiday; and role boundaries between staff and residents broke down to some extent. In this and in other examples, there were benefits for staff members as well, for they experienced the satisfaction of seeing positive results come of their efforts.

Phase III dissemination activities were more complicated for this research, in part because all three strands of the work needed to be communicated, and in part because the residential facilities were so dispersed geographically. Feedback was provided to the Homes in each of the three geographical locations, and in addition a rather large-scale 'Dissemination Day' was planned and carried out.

This research showed that the same basic plan could be used as before — namely, the three phases, as described above, the use of an Action Research

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model with direct care-givers in Part II of the project, the establishment of Project Workers' Teams and of a Project Coordination Group, and interactive procedures for the dissemination and utilisation of research results. In addition it showed that adjustments and adaptations of the basic plan were necessary in order to take into account variations in local circumstances and organisational structures.

Research on 'The Prevailing Cultures and Staff Dynamics in Children's Homes': taking the further steps of using Lewinian life space diagrams and force-field diagrams in organising and presenting findings, and in disseminating research results and supporting the utilisation of findings in the field

This research, conducted by Dorothy Whitaker, Lesley Archer, and Leslie Hicks, was conducted in a number of Social Services Departments and Local Government Authorities across England, and was supported by the U.K. Department of Health rather than by a single Social Services Department.

It had become very clear in the course of earlier work that the character of the staff group and the ways in which it functioned had a critical effect on the nature and quality of care. This research therefore focused on *staff dynamics* as the core issue.

One part of the research design involved us in making monthly visits to six children's homes over a one year period. For the purposes of this paper I will focus on this part of the work. Some of the procedures and structures used in earlier pieces of research were again used. These included the establishment of a Project Workers' Team: three people, one from each of the Authorities which cooperated in the research were seconded part-time to work with the university-based researchers to form a Project Worker's Team. A Project Coordination Group was established and met regularly. We used three phases, as before, and we made use of the Action Research model as a way of collecting data from the staffs of the six Homes.

In Phase I, two workshop meetings were held in each Home. In the first workshop meeting we explored with the staffs the rewards and stresses which they encountered in their work. Staff members were asked: 'What is it like to

work here?' 'What's rewarding?', What's tough?", 'What's easy?' In the second Workshop meeting, the focus was on 'good patches' and 'bad patches' (which we knew occurred in Children's Homes from an earlier part of the research. These were terms used by the staff members themselves. 'Good patches' were a run of days or even weeks during which all went smoothly and staff members felt they could do good work with the young people. 'Bad patches' referred to a run of days or weeks during which crisis followed crisis, the young people were unsettled and often behaved unacceptably, and staff members often felt to be out of control. Staff members were first asked if they experienced good and bad ; 'patches' and, as everyone said that they did, they were then asked 'What is a good patch like?' 'What is a bad patch like?' 'What triggers a bad patch ?' 'What helps to recover from a bad patch ?'

Phase II began by introducing the action research model to each staff group. The intention then was to monitor what occurred over a period of time: which goals were identified, how goals were worked on, what came of working towards particular goals, which further goals were then selected, and so on.

What happened with respect to Action Research was unexpected. Although we had had experience of one Home for elderly people where the staff could not get down to using the Action Research model, we thought of this as an unusual event, likely to be encountered only rarely. Indeed, in the research on small group homes for learning disabled adults, there was no staff group which did not use the model.

In the Children's Homes it was different. While all the staff groups saw the point of the model, and set about formulating goals and making plans, they did not always make consistent, explicit, and full use of the model. A goal might be identified and a plan devised, but then work on the plan would be interrupted by a crisis, or overtaken by events, or proven impracticable because it required cooperation from outside the Home which was not forthcoming, etc. etc. Most Homes were in a virtually constant state of crisis, having to face unexpected and unanticipated events such as an emergency admission, or a young person running away, or a sudden demand from a parent, or new requirements for record-keeping from management, or an uproar in the Home amounting to a riot amongst the young people, and others. Goals which staff members had set for themselves were displaced or set aside, not because the goals were unimportant or because plans could not be made, but because some emergency had arisen which required the attention of the staff. Sometimes further work

towards a goal was rendered unnecessary because the crisis which had made the goal seem very important had resolved itself. In most of the Homes, change was very rapid, and staff members had to devote time and attention to whatever was most urgent at any one time. As one staff member put it, 'we are engaged in crisis management all the time'.

The researchers therefore directed their efforts to tracking events in the Homes, whether related to goals set by staff members or to other events. Sometimes this revealed how previously defined goals were being worked on, or the reasons for a goal having been dropped, with some new goal taking its place. Often it revealed that new events demanded the attention of a staff group. Orderly goal-setting, planning, and related action, in line with the action research model, sometimes occurred. Sometimes runs of events occurred which could be understood in action research terms, even though members of staff did not have the model in mind at the time.

We came to see a new use for the Action Research Model. In addition to using it to guide thinking and action related to practice, it could be used as a template to be placed on a sequence of events, to facilitate understanding them. The fact that action research cycles were often interrupted, or goals abandoned in the light of events, and so on, did not detract from the value of the model for purposes of research: it could be used to illuminate processes of decision and action. Indeed, by examining what could interrupt and what could undo the efforts of a staff group, we learned more about what faces staff groups, about how they think and what they try to do about what faces them, and about sources of reward and of stress.
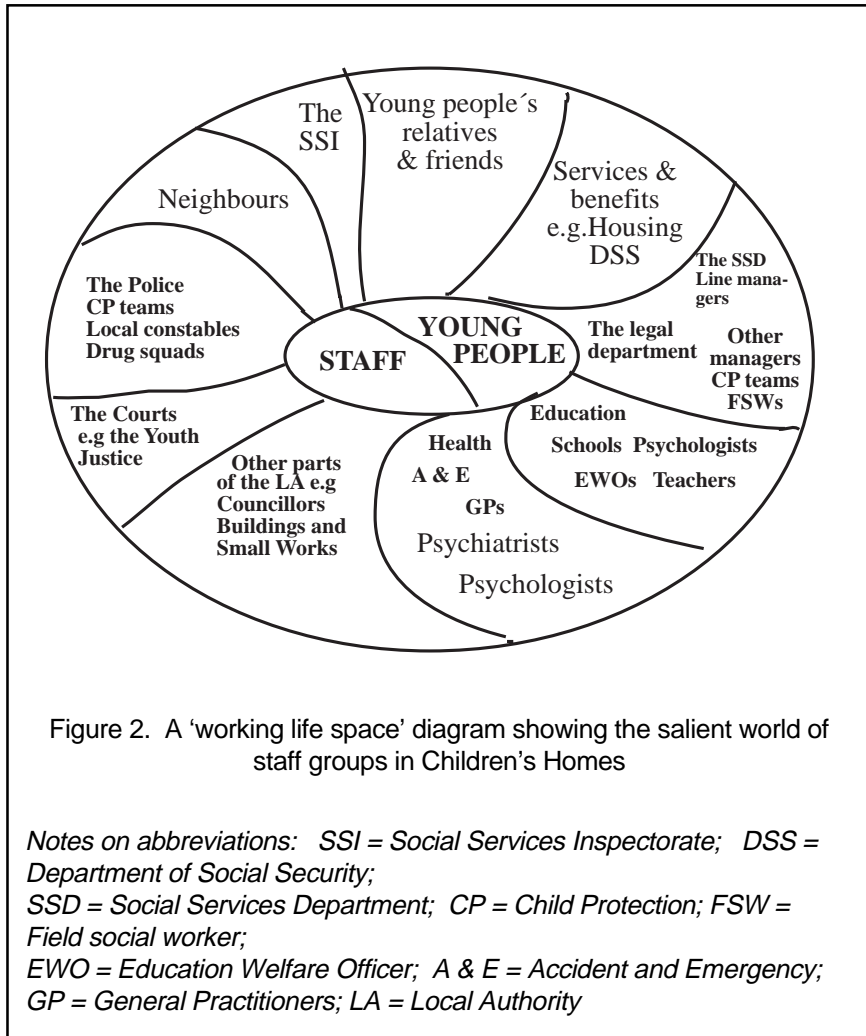
In this research, we also made use of two other Lewinian models, not for collecting data, but for displaying succinctly what was learned from doing the research. These were life space diagrams and force field diagrams. The latter of these was also used in Phase III dissemination and research utilisation activities.

Using a Lewinian 'working life space' diagram to depict research findings

It became evident very early in this research that staff groups in Children's Homes face a wide range of diverse and often difficult tasks, involving them with many people inside and outside the Home, and with various organisations. In reporting research findings we made use of Lewin's idea of the 'life space' to depict the complex world within which a staff group operates. (See references to Lewin's work already cited.)

The idea of the life space diagram is that every individual, every working group or team, operates within a particular environment made up of elements or sectors which are, for him, her, or them, 'salient'. That is, these 'elements' include those who are important, who must be interacted with or whose behaviours impinge on the experience of the person or group concerned, who cannot be ignored, and who shape and influence the particular unique life experience. Parts of the life-space might be occupied by individuals or by groups of people, or by established customs, documents, and laws. As always, the point becomes clearer through an example. In the research on cultures and staff dynamics in Children's Homes we were concerned with the working life of staff groups who were running Children's Homes within the public sector in England, that is, within Social Services Departments and Local Government Authorities. We arrived at the following 'working life space diagram', which applied, in general terms, to staff groups working in this environment:

By tracking events in Homes over time, and comparing Homes with one another, we saw that what was particularly important and preoccupying within the working life space continually altered. New events kept occurring which directed the staff's time and attention into one or another area within the their working life space and, as these were dealt with or dissolved, other areas within the working life space gained prominence. This led us to conceive of the working life space as maintaining its outer boundaries but continually changing. Some segments loomed large at particular times and others contracted, as, for example, problems with neighbours intensified and were then resolved, or a particularly disruptive young person was admitted, or management introduced a new 'quality control' system. In the diagram shown above, the sectors within the life space are shown as more or less equal in area. To show what happens over time in real life, one could draw a series of working life space diagrams which would look something like lapsed-time photographs. Such photographs

Figure 2. A 'working life space' diagram showing the salient world of staff groups in Children's Homes

Notes on abbreviations: SSI = Social Services Inspectorate; DSS = Department of Social Security;
SSD = Social Services Department; CP = Child Protection; FSW = Field social worker;
EWO = Education Welfare Officer; A & E = Accident and Emergency;
GP = General Practitioners; LA = Local Authority

are a series taken at regular intervals of time, from exactly the same standpoint and with exactly the same equipment. One might for instance take a series of such pictures of a flower opening. A series of life space diagrams would work in exactly this way. They would not only show the changes which occurred in what was particularly salient at any one time, but also the pace of change.

The use of force field analyses to depict research findings, and to assist practitioners and their managers to identify desirable changes in practice and policy

Lewin described force fields in a number of his own writings. The idea appears in a nascent form in Lewin, 1935, and is developed in diverse ways in further writing (see sources already cited). One of the uses to which force field analyses can be put is to use it to assist individuals, or groups of people who work together in staffs or teams, to identify goals important to them and the forces which support or hinder progress towards goals. This use dates back to the early days of the Training Laboratories conducted at Bethel, Maine, and elsewhere, and has been used by ourselves and many others in consultation activities.

The force field model is shown diagrammatically in Figure 3: In this diagram: (a) the middle horizontal line represents the present state; (b) the bottom horizontal line (which is not always needed) is a reminder that any given situation could be worse than it now is; (c) upward-pointing arrows represent forces which press towards achieving the goal: they are facilitating or supportive factors (In Lewin's terms, 'driving' forces; (d) downward-pointing arrows represent forces which prevent movement towards the goal: they are hindering forces (In Lewin's terms, 'restraining' forces); (e) the length or thickness of an arrow indicates the perceived strength of the force which it represents; (f) the middle line representing the current state is never totally, or 'completely''still' — it moves up and down in response to fluctuations in the forces in the field — but not very much: In Lewin's terms, the situation is in a state of 'quasi-stationary equilibrium'.

The representation as a whole is referred to as a 'force field diagram' — that is, it depicts a 'field' within which forces operate to keep a situation in relative stasis. Change towards the goal occurs if (a) supportive forces can be strengthened or new ones introduced; or if (b) hindering forces can be weakened or removed; providing that (c) any new supportive force which is introduced does not trigger a countervailing hindering force.

(This model is to be found in many of Lewin's writings, as he evolved it and applied to diverse real-life situations. See especially Lewin, 1947; and Cartwright's selection of Lewin's papers, 1951).

PREFERRED STATE OR GOAL

CURRENT STATE

"EVEN WORSE"
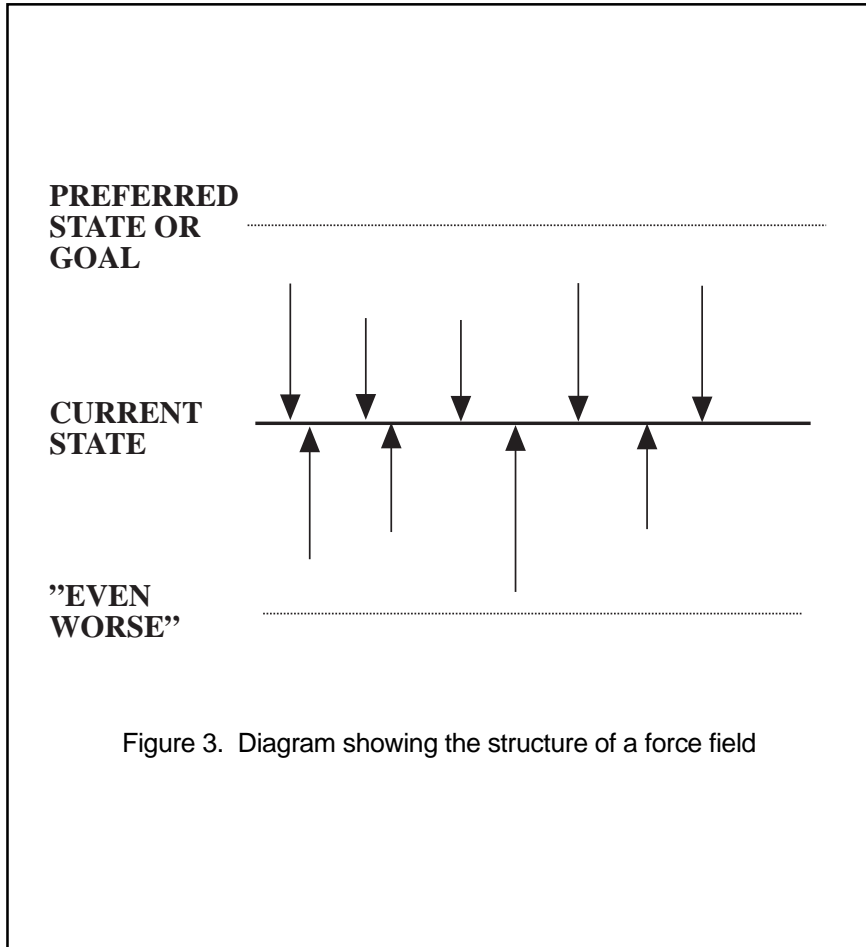
Figure 3. Diagram showing the structure of a force field

Force field diagrams work very well as aids to problem-solving because they make possible a vivid depiction of the many influences which may be present in a given situation, and guard against assuming that some single cause is at work. They encourage giving thought to numbers of forces rather than the one(s) which come to mind initially as the most important, or (in many cases) the most intractable. They encourage distinguishing between forces which cannot be influenced and forces which can.

Our research on Children's Homes showed that a large number of forces influenced (1) whether good practice could or could not occur; and (2) outcomes for individual children and adolescents. Force field diagrams could be constructed for each of these. The goal lines would be, respectively, 'better practice'; and 'good outcomes'.

We thus used force field diagrams for two purposes: to depict research findings (towards the close of Phase II); and to assist staff groups and their managers to diagnose their own situations and define possible actions to improve practice and outcomes (in Phase III — the dissemination and research utilization phase).

These two applications of the force field idea will be illustrated in terms of findings related to the quality of practice. A large number of episodes of practice were available through the research. Content analysis was applied to these episodes, and by this means features of good and poor practice were identified. The next step was then taken of identifying the factors which increased the likelihood or good practice occurring, or which interfered with it. A prose description could of course be provided, but a prose description of many, many factors would be bound to be lengthy and it would be hard to keep all the factors in mind. Showing the factors diagrammatically, as forces operating in a favourable or an unfavourable direction, made it much easier to see how individual items related one to another and to grasp a complex set of findings. Force field diagrams were well suited to displaying what was learned.

When the force field structure was used with reference to the quality of practice, the upper horizontal line, or goal, was defined as 'better practice', the middle horizontal line as 'present state of practice', and the bottom horizontal line as 'poorer practice'. Forces which help and forces which hinder good practice were fitted into the diagram. A very large number of factors were identified — in fact, 35 driving or supportive forces, and 37 restraining or hindering factors. Many though not all of these occurred as pairs of opposing forces.

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A total of 72 forces was far too many to hold in mind all at once. In displaying them on a force field diagram, they were grouped into clusters:

- practice skills and sensitivities
- relations between managers and the staffs of Homes
- relations between staff groups and field social workers
- decision-making and monitoring procedures in place in the larger organisation
- ground rules in place within the larger organisation and how these operated
- structures and practices within a Home
- the mix of young people in the Home
- the courts and how they operated in respect of young people who had committed offences
- the comings and goings of young people
- staff appointment policies and procedures
- training
- the wider network around individual young people and around the Home

As said, a varying number of specific forces fell into each of these clusters. As one example, within the cluster which we titled 'relations between managers and the staffs of Homes', there were a number of sub-factors. Good practice was hindered if communication between management and the staff of a Home was one-way, so that guidelines and procedures were handed down, and discussion did not occur; if members of staff heard about prospective changes through rumour and were in a state of uncertainty about the future of their Home; and/or if members of staff felt and acted helplessly in the face of management decisions which they considered inadvisable.

Still within the same cluster— relations between staff and management — good practice was facilitated if procedures were in place for staffs to share their experience and practice wisdom with management, such that management received useful information from on-the-ground workers, especially about the likely consequence of prospective new policies; if staff groups were consulted by higher managers about prospective changes and their views taken into account; and if a staff group was prepared to take initiatives with management with respect to some departmental procedure which in their view worked to the disadvantage of the young people.

An important finding was that skills held by those working directly with the children could be in place but nullified if certain hindering forces were present. For example, hindering forces might be in place, such as key information about a newly admitted child not reaching the residential staff; , or a decision made by someone higher up in the organisation to place a child in foster care which interrupted crucially important positive work being done in the Home. These could make it difficult for a staff group actually to use the skills they had: a potential facilitating force was thus weakened.

The force field diagram which depicted research findings was a composite arrived at through examining all the data available. In applying it to particular Homes and particular encompassing organisations, it was expected that some forces, some clusters of forces, would be more important than others. Some might not appear at all — for example if none of the young people living in the Home was involved with the courts.

The same force field diagram which showed research results was used in the Phase III dissemination and research-utilisation phase. A 'Dissemination day' was attended by members of staffs in the cooperating Homes and managers at different levels within the larger organisation. The composite force field diagram was made available as a scheme of ideas against which those present could set their own experience. They could thus test the model for fit against the realities which were in place in their own work setting. They could select from the model those forces which they considered applied to them and their situation, and elaborate the model to fit their own experience. From this, they could identify potential actions which in their view might usefully take in their own unique work settings.

In the course of the Dissemination Day, discussions were held in 'vertical slice' groups — that is, in groups made up of people from the same organisation, including those providing direct care; first-line managers of those providing direct care; higher managers and policy makers; and members of training departments). Each group could examine the generalized force field diagram for its relevance to own unique situation. They could form judgements about which forces they could influence in order to improve their own practice or policy and the likelihood of better outcomes for the people they were looking after, or responsible for. They could also, of course, see the limits on their power — on the forces which they were not in a position to influence. Consistent with Lewin's recommendations, members of these groups were encouraged to

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identify hindering factors which could be removed or weakened. This often simultaneously strengthened potential facilitating factors.

By such an activity, which took several hours, the composite force field diagram, combined with an opportunity to test its relevance to own situation, linked research finding *per se*   to actions which could be taken by various players in the real, always unique world, in order to improve practice.

Taking a longer view of the sequence of research studies and regarding each as comprising an action research cycle in a series of cycles

If one refers back to the action research diagram presented earlier, one can see that each piece of research in the sequence of five, described above, built on certain learnings achieved in the previous one. Some learnings had to do with substantive findings, as was the case when the research on the quality of life in residential homes for the elderly made evident the importance of the quality of life of staff groups as well as the quality of life of residents. Accordingly, an interest in staff groups was carried forward into later research. Some learnings had to do with ways of maintaining the support and interest of those who provided data. A somewhat rudimentary procedure for doing this was used in the first quality of life study, and was developed further in subsequent research.

One can track how 'one thing led to another' by thinking of each piece of research as a single action research cycle, followed by another, and another. In every case, a research goal was identified and spelled out into a set of detailed goals. An action plan — that is, a research design — was devised and acted upon. Consequences then followed. Some of these had to do with what was learned with reference to research purposes. Other consequences had to do with how practitioners and managers felt about the research process, whether they became informed about the findings, and whether and how they made use of research results in the real world of practice and of service delivery.

As seems to be the case whenever the action research framework is used, for any purpose, the step which consists of noting and assessing and evaluating the consequences of the action taken, and taking a new reading, is crucial. Without it, one does not learn from experience, or learn from it as fully as one could.

Examining the *full* consequences of having conducted the first piece of research, on 'The experience of residential care from the perspectives of children, parents, and care-givers', led to the inclusion of process goals as well as substantive research goals in the next research project. It was evident that this research project was successful in meeting its research purposes, but research findings were not, as far as we could see, used by practitioners and managers. In trying to understand this (in action research terms, 'observing, assessing, evaluating the consequences of a course of action; taking a new reading') we came to the view that those participating in and cooperating with the research did not have a sense of ownership or investment in it.

Their 'participation' had been restricted to agreeing to provide access to research subjects, and, indeed, we had asked for no more than that. The idea that a sense of ownership could well be important was adopted as a working hypothesis. It led to including, in the next piece of research, the 'process' goal of providing for the closer involvement of managers and practitioners in goal-setting, getting in touch with already-established understandings held by on-the-ground care workers, and keeping communication channels open as the research went on.

The idea of using a three-phase structure for the research surfaced early on and was maintained in subsequent pieces of research. Phase I activities — getting in touch with on-the-ground workers' practice wisdom — *always* worked well. Care needed to be taken to formulate the questions which were to put to participants in terms which made sense to them and which could be expected to tap into their experience. If this was right, or right enough, discussions were lively and rich, and enjoyed by all. Involving employees of the organisation as research associates in Phase II — the conduct of the research — worked extremely well in some cases and not so well in others.

Sometimes a research associate slotted into the team quickly and easily. Sometimes we had to work harder to convey the nature of research, how it differs from practice, and its particular ethics. The Project Coordination Groups set up to meet at intervals throughout Phase II proved to be an excellent forum for discussing the research itself and related issues. These worked best when membership represented a full or nearly full vertical slice of the organisation. This could not always be achieved, or it took time to achieve.

Phase III (dissemination) activities worked well, on the whole. These took different forms, depending on the target group and the mix of attenders. When a dissemination activity was planned for those who occupied different positions within a large hierarchical organisation (a 'vertical slice' group) some top managers attended but others did not. Their absence was a loss, for they were the ones in the organisation who held power to introduce new structures and procedures which would support good practice and advantageous forms of information-sharing.

The Lewinian ideas and related procedures which found their way into our research activities were action research, (working) life space, and force field analysis. Action research was made a part of research design and was used in three successive research projects. Life space diagrams and force field diagrams were used in the most recent research as economical and effective ways of depicting complex research findings. Force field diagrams were also used as part of dissemination activities. For example, a force field diagram which pertained to the goal of improving practice in children's homes was used in a Dissemination Day and proved very useful in assisting practitioners and managers to think through how research findings pertained to their own unique work situations and to identify actions they could take.

We have become convinced that a partnership framework for research; the Lewinian models of action research, life space, and force field dynamics; and the Lewinian spirit of sharing and engaging in mutual learning deserve a place in research where one hopes that the research results will taken on board, understood, and used by practitioners and those who manage service provision in the helping professions.

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Some developments from Lewin's dynamic models

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Background

When I came out of engineering to go to university, after the War, I sought answers to two groups of questions. One had to do with the processes of diagnosis and design. What I had learnt through qualifying as an electrical engineer did not at all explain the processes which I engaged in and experienced when designing something new, and when seeking to diagnose the condition of some piece of electronic apparatus. The other group of questions had to do with the events which occurred in the organisations where I had been working, and with the experience of work itself.

No light at all was shed on either group of issues by what I then learnt at Oxford of economics, nor of statistics. On the other hand, the study of logic, under the tuition of Friedrich Waismann, had by contrast much to offer, particularly on inference and on inductive reasoning. One may by hindsight recognise a similarity between Waismann's interest in the logic of everyday thinking and everyday language, and Lewin's readiness to take everyday preoccupations as subjects of research interest.

It was after this, at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the early nineteen-fifties, that I first encountered systematic attempts to understand organisations. Professor Carroll J. Brown put together a graduate seminar on organisation to which the leading thinkers of the day on that subject came and contributed. There was at the time a substantial doctrinal difference between what was shortly to become MIT's Sloan School of Industrial Management, and Harvard Business School. Both institutions made extensive use of case studies, but whilst HBS then relied on them almost exclusively as the chosen medium for teaching, MIT made considerable provision for inputs of theory. By hindsight, one might see this as to be expected from a great engineering school which had explicitly set out not only to teach by engagement with real-life problems, but to spur its students and faculty alike to work at the 'cutting edge' of fundamental theory in their subjects.

The stimulus to look beyond the study of organisations, in order to understand how people functioned in them, came not so much from the content of the teaching as from the impact of what I perceived as a cultural difference between the USA and the UK. Throughout the years of my technical education, and in my working life as an engineer, I never saw people cooperating to work in groups. My experience afterwards, at Oxford, was that although students often attended for tuition in pairs, for the most part they then simply took turns week by week in writing essays, rather than actively working together. Seminars were likewise aggregations of individuals.

At MIT, by contrast, the projects which were a feature of every course were commonly undertaken by groups of four or so, and sometimes by larger groups, working together. Despite what one heard, then as now, about the virtues of competition and individual self-reliance, cooperation appeared to be the norm. People at MIT, coming from diverse backgrounds, cooperated to work together in groups in a way to which I was totally unaccustomed It became evident that to understand events and experiences in organisations, and in particular to understand how people worked together, something more than a knowledge of organisational theory and formal organisational structures would be required. One would need also to look at how people interact with each other, with their work, and with the organisational processes and structures which constitute their working environment.

First encounters with Lewin's influence: Lewin's intellectual descendants

This being so, on completion of my studies in what had become the Sloan School, Professor Brown introduced me to Herbert A. Shepard and Alex Bavelas, with whom I worked during the ensuing two years. Herbert Shepard was himself already involved in T-groups, to the origin of which Lewin had been one of the greatest contributors, yet I know of only one of our circle of associates who joined with him in T-group work at that time. Alex Bavelas had applied in industry Lewin's ideas on social change.

 Kurt Lewin had been at MIT, of course. It was not until three years after his death that I went there, yet he was an invisible presence. We rarely spoke explicitly of him, but he exercised a potent and pervasive influence, not only on theory but on practice, and most notably on interactions between those who teach and those who learn. It was only later that I came to appreciate that I had

been for long under his influence, through the effects which interactions with him had had upon his colleagues.

The spirit of Lewin manifested itself in the interactive and non-directive mode of teaching and working which pervaded the group. That Lewin's seminal function in this was not at the time evident, I would attribute to the pervasive practices of interaction which characterised MIT. From a distance it might perhaps seem odd that Lewin should go to an institute of technology, where the 'hard' sciences might be expected to prevail over humane studies and humane procedures. At MIT, however, quality, in the sense of original and far-reaching work and thought, prevailed, together with an easy colleagueship and companionship. Seen from outside, this may look like awareness of being an elite; the same situation in the pre-eminent college of Oxford was famously referred to as an awareness of 'easy and effortless superiority'. From inside, however, it was rather that to score points over others and to seek to assert superiority over them would be both unnecessary and trivial. One therefore could attend single-mindedly to the work in hand, without the distraction of playing win-lose games.

In other words, the atmosphere by which Lewin had been surrounded at MIT was one which was surely in the highest degree congenial to him, and in accord not only with his ideas but with his convictions. So far as concerns non-autocratic dealings with colleagues and pupils, what came from him, and what was native to the culture of the place, were so similar that even now I cannot clearly distinguish them from one another. One might reasonably presume to say that his was a voice and a mind that MIT needed, and that MIT was what he needed.

Work in England

After coming back to England in the middle fifties to take up the position to which I had been invited at the University of Leeds, I had occasion to take on a program of courses for established managers which hitherto had been under the auspices of the County Education Authority. With the agreement of the University and of the County, I was to be free to develop the courses as might seem best. In cooperation with D. Harvie Hay, a Canadian colleague who had been a member of the same group at MIT, I introduced the ways of working to which we were both accustomed. The courses were directed towards managing people in industrial and similar organisations.

We began by using case material and elements of relevant theory, and moved progressively to participants' own concerns, typically presented in the form of cases. Our methods were non-directive. In the beginning this caused a severe overthrow of participants' expectations, since they took for granted that the program would be one of prescription, to be backed up by our using academic authority. The way of dealing with participants was typically Lewinian.

We made extensive use of procedures based on those advocated by N.R.F.Maier, who, like Martin Seligman in recent years, was one of that distinguished few whose extensive studies of animals — in Maier's case, rats — had inspired them to look with great effect at the human condition. Maier's published work has many references to Lewin. He makes extensive use of the studies by Lewin, Lippitt and White[1] and Lippitt's subsequent study[2], and cites Lewin's major works. On reviewing his references to Lewin, I am struck by the similarity of form between Maier's recommendations on discussion methods and Lewin's use of the force field idea.

Our procedure was to elicit from a group, or from an individual, what the group or the person saw as the favourable and the unfavourable aspects of whatever proposal was under discussion, and post these up where they could be considered. This procedure is analogous to the enumerating and displaying of favourable and adverse 'forces' on a force field diagram — that is to say, on a simplified graphic representation such as is described below, and which derived directly from Lewin[3]. In both procedures, whoever is the source of the information may then consider it, and reappraise it.. When a contentious action-proposal or a contentious idea had cropped up, we would invite the group to enumerate all that they saw as weighing against it. Whatever was said was posted up where it could be seen. This posting was done without argument or comment from the staff. When further contributions tailed off, the participants would be invited to group the items which had been posted, again making their

1 Lewin, K., Lippitt, R. & White, R.K. 'Patterns of aggressive behavior in experimentally created social climates'. *J. Soc. Psychol.*, 1939, **10**, 271-299.

2 Lippitt, R. 'An experimental study of the effects of democratic and authoritarian group atmospheres.' *Univ. Iowa. Stud. Child. Welf.*, 1940, **16**, 43-195.

3 See for instance in Kurt Lewin *Field Theory in Social Science: selected theoretical papers.* (Dorwin Cartwright, Ed.). New York: Harper, 1951, p. 226.

own judgements without suggestions from us. This would typically lead not only to elimination of redundancy, but to deletion of items which the group judged trivial or ill-considered. An invitation then to append any possible favourable items was likely to lead to serious consideration as to whether there might after all be something to be said for the idea or action, and eventually to posting up what group members themselves, when free of any need to contend with us, saw in favour of the idea or the action.

This procedure, like the construction of a force field representation, leaves control of the elements deployed entirely in the hands of the person or persons concerned. He, or they, thus did not have as it were to fight on two fronts, by having to deal not only with new ideas or new possibilities for action, but also with fending off someone who was pressing the new possibilities on them and seeking to overwhelm their judgement by argument and authority.

The effect of either method, i.e. force field, or non-directive handling of a purposeful discussion, is furthermore to assist those concerned to 'step outside the chalk circle' — which is to say, to become aware of their own assumptions and beliefs, and so to be able to think about them, rather than merely having blind faith in them. The point of referring to it as a 'chalk circle' is that once one steps out of it, it may be seen to be a self-imposed and self-maintained boundary to one's thinking and actions. The shift of viewpoint alone, from blind assumption and belief to awareness, and hence to choice, looks ex ante to be not only difficult but inconceivable. Yet ex post it is easy, simple and obvious — as would stepping out of a chalk circle which is no more than that, although one has hitherto treated as an insuperable boundary.

Using Lewin's ideas: force field models

In working with groups of managers on problems of their own, we made use of procedures derived from Lewin's thinking. Lewin appears to have used the langauge of fields of force, in the sense used for instance in electrostatics. The models used are thence known as 'force field' models. His fundamental idea, however, is directly from classical mechanics. It is that a 'force' manifests by acceleration of a mass, and that if application of a force does not result in an acceleration — or movement— there must be some other force acting in a contrary direction.

This idea can be transposed and applied to situations in which someone is making efforts without avail — where someone is exerting a 'force' without its having the consequence of some desired change in position:

Figure 1. Graphic representation of a force being exerted so as to produce a shift in some desired direction.
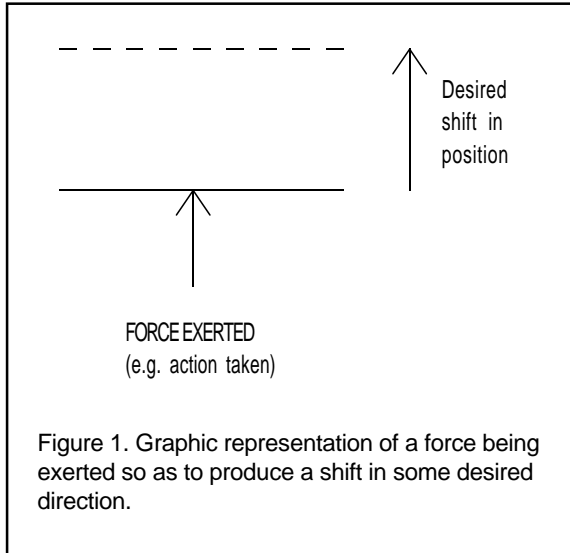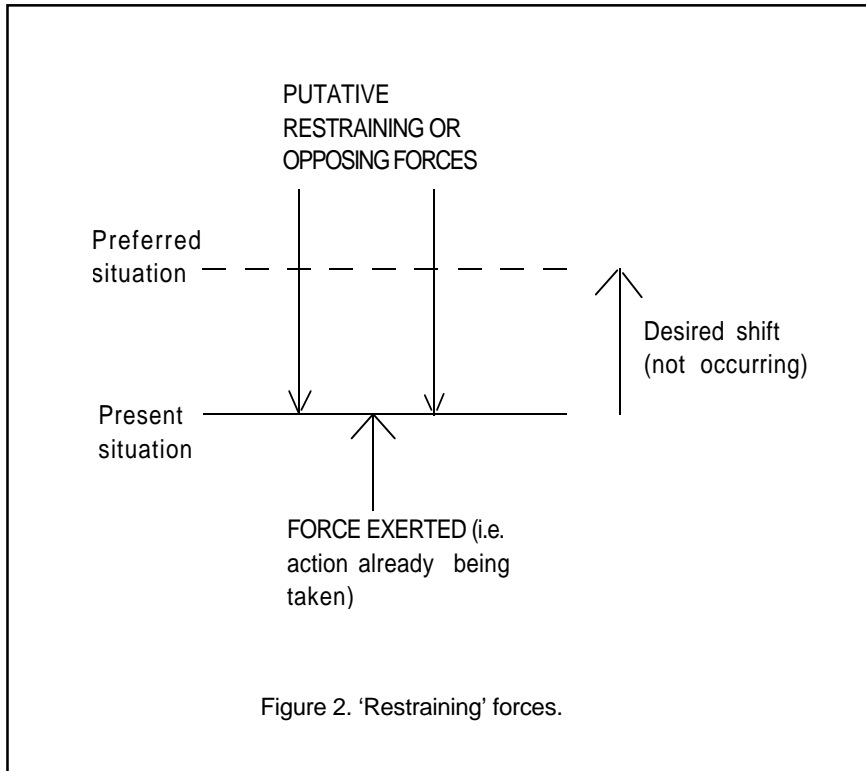
The procedure followed with a group of managers was to ascertain first what the desired 'shift' was — for instance, to increase productivity in some section of a plant — and then to enumerate one by one the efforts being made to this end.

Each such effort or action would then be represented graphically as an arrow, parallel to that shown in Figure 1, as 'force exerted'.

When their efforts are of no avail, many managers respond by repeating or augmenting their many original efforts, and possibly also by deploying yet more efforts of other kinds, in the same direction. The response to frustration is thus more action, and often 'more of the same', or 'try yet harder'.

After representing actions already being taken as upward-pointing arrows, the next step was to present those concerned with the reflection that 'If application of a force does not result in movement, there must be some other force acting in a contrary direction'. The car is stationary, and the forces on it may therefore be thought of as being in equilibrium, so the condition may be described as one of stationary, or quasi-stationary, equilibrium. In concrete terms, if for instance one's car does not move forward when one depresses the accelerator pedal, one might press harder — or one might reflect that perhaps the handbrake is still on. The initial representation then has provision added to it for opposing, or 'restraining', forces:

```
                    PUTATIVE
                    RESTRAINING OR
                    OPPOSING FORCES

    Preferred
    situation    ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─              ↑
                   │         │                     │
                   │         │                 Desired  shift
                   │         │                 (not  occurring)
                   ▼         ▼
    Present  ──────────────────────────
    situation              ↑
                           │
                    FORCE EXERTED (i.e.
                    action already  being
                    taken)
```

Figure 2. 'Restraining' forces.

The people concerned would then be invited to consider what might be the restraining forces, rather than immediately prescribing action. They were thus invited to engage in diagnosis, by considering the possibility of other forces, in addition to their own efforts, which might be acting in the field. Use of the model suggested that they review possible restraining forces, and be assisted in perceiving any connexions between forces pressing towards the preferred situation, and the restraining forces which were preventing it.

So far, what has been described is a 'force-field exercise' such as was commonly used in the nineteen-fifties and since. Such an exercise was usually assigned to course participants working in pairs or (less often) singly, and would be expected to take about two hours.

One might well ask, how is it that so simple a model should be experienced as so effective?

1. Construction of the graphic model gives users the experience of 'stepping outside the chalk circle', referred to already above.

2. The Lewinian procedures by which force field models are commonly introduced are non-prescriptive and non-adversarial. The stress of contemplating change in one's ideas, beliefs, assumptions and favoured modes of action is not confounded with defending against the incursions of an authoritative teacher. In this connexion one might visualise a force field diagram to show the teacher or trainer's efforts and their consequences. Vigorous efforts to shift the attitudes of the people who are being taught, by resort to argument and command, might then be seen to be directly linked to the mobilising of resistance to such efforts — with the consequence that not only the invasive efforts, but the ideas themselves, get repelled.

3. There is a simple practical benefit. People who would never attempt to work out in their heads the sum of a dozen large numbers, or the product of other than very simple multiplication, will nevertheless often seek to do the logical equivalent of complicated computations unaided by any visual representation of them. Graphical models which are logically soundly grounded and which are yet compounded from relatively simple elements have therefore much to offer, in assisting people to think clearly about complex situations.

4. The idea of multiple causation — that any outcome is the consequence of no single event or factor, but of many is likely to appear abstruse. It may even be culturally unpalatable, for instance in England, where finding the person who is to be blamed is commonly used to put a satisfying end to the painstaking process of comprehending the whole of a course of events. The experience of working through force-field representations of one's own situation, deploys one's own perceptions, and thus provides a potent introduction to the prevalence of multi-causation in human affairs.

5. Use of force field exercises is usually directed towards having people attend to the possibility of reducing adverse forces, rather than responding to resistance by just pushing harder. This is indeed the prime lesson of the graphic display. The whole procedure, however, of constructing such a

depiction of events, itself directs attention to diagnosis and understanding, rather than to brief and brisk summary judgements as short preludes to vigorous action.

6. There is especial benefit to be had from recognising in practice that one's own efforts may often be directly linked to the strength of the forces opposing them, and so be counter-productive and self-defeating.

7. As when one releases the handbrake of a car which one is seeking to drive away, rather than leaving the brake on and increasing the power delivered by the engine, so reducing opposing forces is likely to reduce the pressures experienced in a situation. The engineers who design the Saab car appear to have taken this route towards economy and efficiency, by designing cars with conspicuously low rolling friction — that is, low resistance to preferred movement.

Subsequent developments

In 1958, at a meeting lasting a few days, held a year after an initial course, a participant presented a problem which seemed intractable. When he had arrayed the restraining or opposing forces, he could see no way of favourably affecting any of them. The situation is shown in Figure 3, below.

Figure 3. Initial presentation of the problem
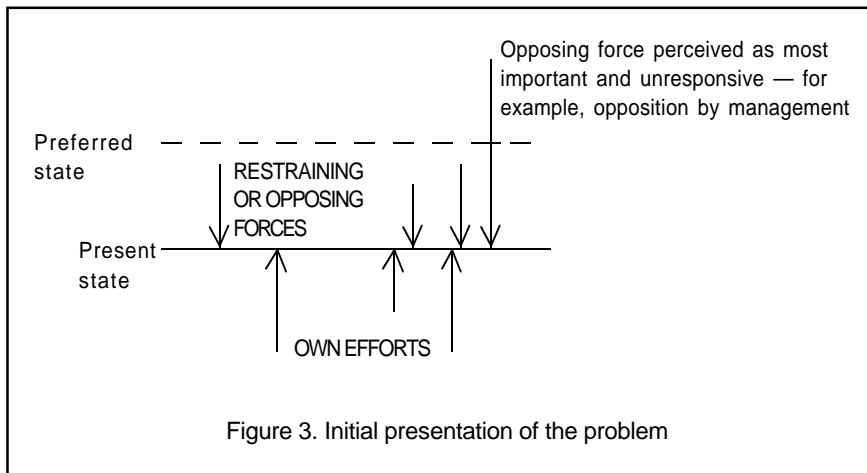
In response we proposed taking what he reckoned as the most important of the opposing forces — namely, opposition by management — and treating it as a state or condition relative to which a preferred state could be specified. The forces believed to be respectively favouring and opposing the desired shift were then displayed, as shown in Figure 4.

FORCES SEEN AS
SUSTAINING OR
AUGMENTING
OPPOSITION

Force 'A', sustaining
opposition from
management

Desired state: lessened
opposition from
management

Management's
opposition to the
desired change

FORCES SEEN AS
LIKELY TO REDUCE
OR OVERCOME
OPPOSITION

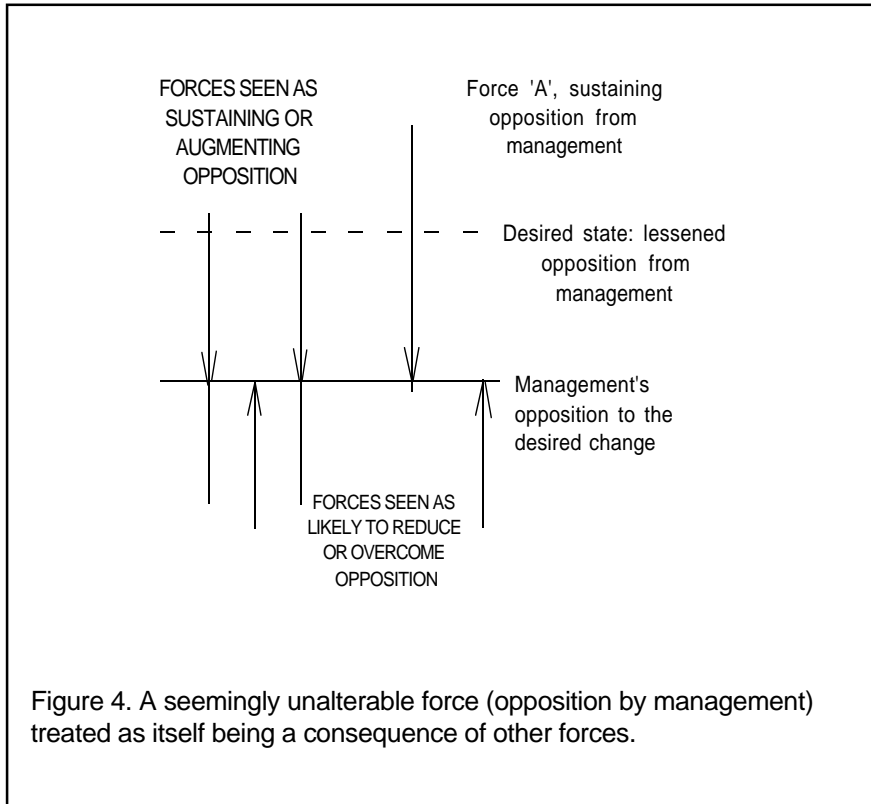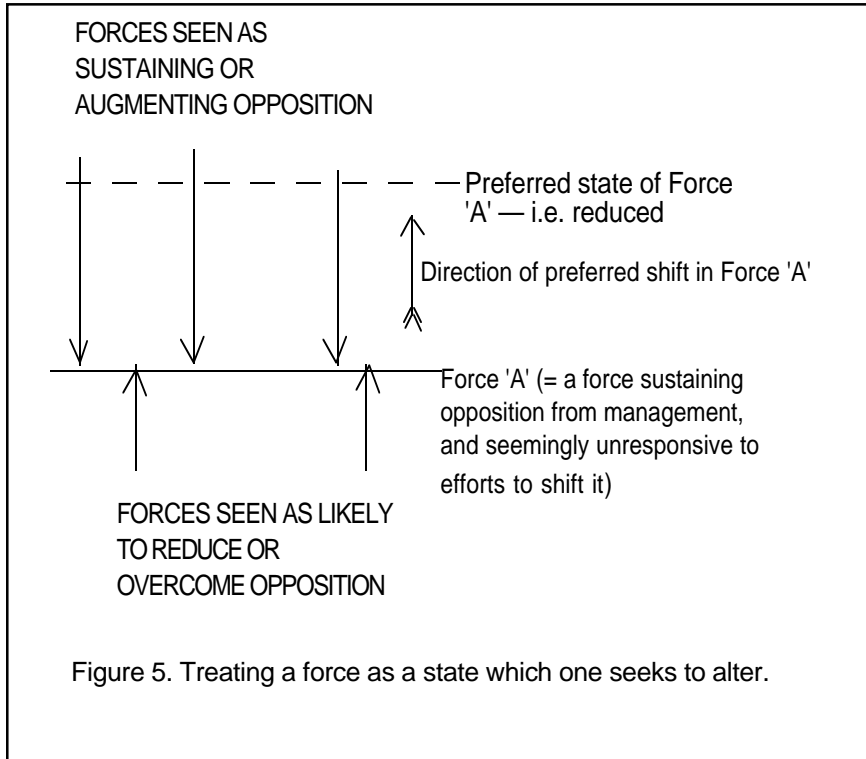Figure 4. A seemingly unalterable force (opposition by management) treated as itself being a consequence of other forces.

When forces determining opposition by management were considered, a further seemingly unalterable force emerged. This is shown as 'Force 'A'' in Figure 4. That force could then in turn be examined , by treating it as itself held in place by yet other forces, which then are brought to light:

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FORCES SEEN AS
SUSTAINING OR
AUGMENTING OPPOSITION

- - - - - - - - - Preferred state of Force
'A' — i.e. reduced

Direction of preferred shift in Force 'A'

Force 'A' (= a force sustaining
opposition from management,
and seemingly unresponsive to
efforts to shift it)

FORCES SEEN AS LIKELY
TO REDUCE OR
OVERCOME OPPOSITION

Figure 5. Treating a force as a state which one seeks to alter.

Through this procedure new insights into the determinants of unwanted stability — which is to say, what made the initial problem so intractable — were brought to light. What might be thought of as an iterative or recursive process of force field analysis had thus emerged. The process is analogous to one which can be used in applied dynamics, to resolve forces into the components which determine their resultant direction and magnitude, so as to find ways of influencing the determining forces themselves. It might thus be considered as the transposition of an idea not about fields, but about forces, from applied mathematics or mechanics.

From force field diagrams to 'solutional space' modelling

Here is considered a graphic model not developed out of force field models, but compatible with them. The model was developed in order to think about processes in which a group is invited to make a decision with due regard to the limits of the group's own powers.   All action is subject to limits or boundaries.

A boundary is a line. It is in effect a contour, in the sense of being a defining line, effectively joining or being made up of points at any of which an attempt to go further — i.e. to cross the line — will encounter resistance. The position of such a line may be thought of as the resul of forces acting upon it from either side.

Boundaries define domains. A 'domain' is, then, some area defined and delimited by boundaries.

A strategist is by definition sovereign in his own 'domain'. That domain would then be the notional area or space in which he has freedom of choice and of action. He might be free to operate, so long as he kept within the limits imposed by, for instance, company policy, available money, supply of materials, physical limits of his plant's terrain, and the availability of staff in the area. He might represent his position thus:

Figure 6. A 'solutional space' diagram.

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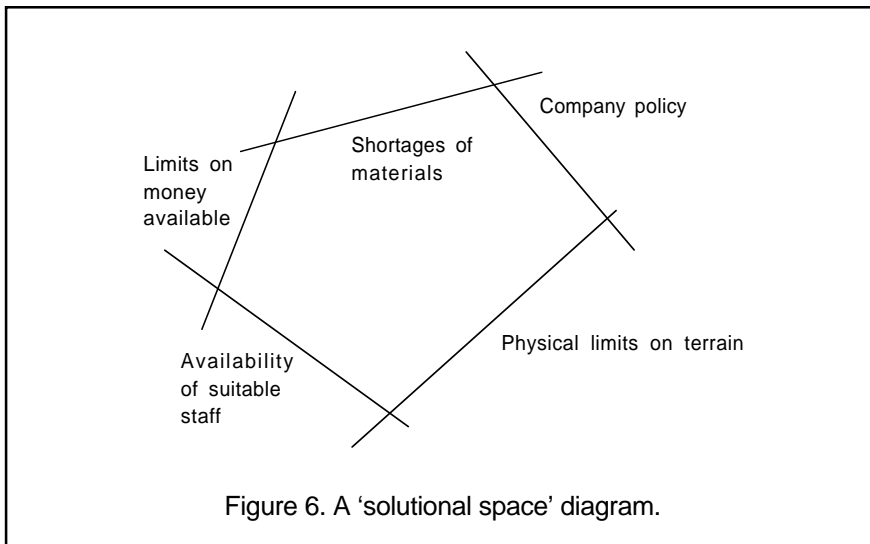
Such a representation might well be called a diagram of 'solutional space', since all possible actions must lie within it, being bounded as they are by the constraints which constitute its periphery.

The diagram has been assembled as a simple two-dimensional map. Benefits would follow from constructing instead a multi-dimensional representation. However, the ensuing complexity would be likely to offset the gains. The idea itself, however, translates readily into procedures for arraying, and thence for investigating, the constraints within which a decision is to be taken or a plan is to be made.

Each boundary line can be treated as were the opposing — or restraining — forces in the example. One might for instance use a force field representation to make explicit, and thence to review the consequences and the determinants of material shortages, then perhaps of other of the constraints. A solutional space diagram could thus make feasible the integration of numerous force field representations.

The model lends itself to incorporation of numerous ideas transposed from other realms. One might for example introduce the idea of continuous and discontinuous gradients of approach to particular constraints, and favourable and adverse slopes. It is possible, for example, to incur more and more debts, fairly easily, but it is less easy — as it were, more 'uphill work' to repay them. Again, one can go a little more into debt, and a little more, bit by bit; but when creditors initiate insolvency proceedings, the process alters discontinuously and irreversibly, rather like falling off the edge of something.

Building on Lewin's work: emphasis on purposes

Force field exercises typically took about two to two and a half hours, with the first ten or twenty minutes spent on selecting a problem to be worked on. The problem was to be formulated in terms of two states — one, how things already are, or would be without intervention, and the other, how the person doing the exercise would prefer them to be. In subsequent work on strategy the author adopted precisely this formulation — namely, preferring some state of affairs, or 'scenario', over some other — as the operational definition of 'purpose'.

In force field exercises as they were customarily used, choosing the problem was typically only a necessary preliminary to the fruitful activity of working through a force field analysis. A different focus of attention emerged during a workshop for teachers of gifted children which Dorothy Stock Whitaker and the author conducted in 1964. During the preparatory stage, of selecting the problem to be worked on, one of the teachers showed inordinate concern that a particular child should make certain progress — a process which seemed to lie largely outside the teacher's control. We raised questions about this concern. To what end, for this teacher, was this progress a route or means?

This question could not be answered in one move. Answers at first were given in terms of the child, rather than of the teacher herself — for instance, 'to develop the child's skills in mathematics'. Recurrent posing of the question '...and to what end is <u>that</u> a means?', however, eventually served to uncover what the desired event meant for the person who was desirous of it — i.e., what it meant for the teacher. The end-term of the series of questions and answers was a specification, by and for the teacher, of a preferred experience: the teacher wished to feel effective. The desired change in the child was a route to this end. The progression from the presenting problem, in which the teacher's purpose was stated in term's of the child's behaviour, to uncovering the end to which this was a means, took several successive half-days of work.

One might wonder how it took so long. The length of time required perhaps becomes more understandable if one reflects on the change in her thinking about herself and her duty which was required of the teacher. Her life was built around her being an altruistic helper. For her to understand her own purposes more clearly required her to recognise not only the child's needs, but her own. For such recognition to be of any lasting use to her, she needed to work her way through to it herself — which took time.

The same procedure, namely ends-means inquiry by recurrently posing questions of the form '...and why would you seek to achieve <u>that</u>?' or '...to what would that serve as a route?' was subsequently used in the nineteen seventies by the same staff in a program for the development of consultants, in Sweden. The program was in three parts, concerned respectively with individual, group and organisation. The core of the first (individual) phase was the elucidation of personal purposes, with participants using reiterated ends-and-means questioning.

In the third phase of the same program, on organisational diagnosis and strategy, participants were required to inquire into the flows and processes of information and of resources by which various organisations and enterprises sustained themselves. Graphic system-based models were used to map the flows, and participants were asked to inquire into the complex of assumptions and beliefs which constituted the model of self-and-surroundings which was being used by whoever directed the organisation's strategies. Here again, elucidation of purposes was crucial.

Two 'flashbacks', about purposes

The first relates to teaching engineering undergraduates about the methods of problem-solving to be met with in industry, in the middle nineteen-fifties. When students went out to do study-projects in firms, it became evident that problems could not be meaningfully stated, let alone solved, except by reference to purposes. There was a time when warehousing problems were frequently studied in student projects. This coincided with the availability of excellent informative literature about Coventry Climax fork-lift trucks, including calculations showing how soon the cost of a truck might be retrieved by the savings it made. Installing fork lift trucks seemed a fine solution — but to what problem?

If one encounters a full warehouse in a factory, or a warehouse from which goods move out only slowly, is this a problem? or is it a success? is it to be remedied, or encouraged? Whether a full warehouse is a success or a problem depends on what ends the warehouse is to serve. If it is there to ensure minimal investment in idle goods, then nothing should stay in it, and 'full' = 'failed'. If it is there to provide against infrequent contingencies, or to hold stock against an advantageous rise in prices, then for it to be full is an indication of success. To make sense — or meaning — of it, it is therefore necessary to ascertain to what ends it is intended to serve as a means.

Clearly, a generalisation about 'all' or 'most' warehouses is only an abstraction from other instances, at other times and in other places. Such an abstraction can at best serve to indicate what happens elsewhere. This may then serve as a rough guide to what happens in many other warehouses. In any real case, however, it is then necessary to determine the ends to be served in that actual concrete and specific case.

To raise the question 'what ends is the warehouse meant to serve?' makes it possible to ask whether having a warehouse is the most effective or economical route or means to those ends. Why does the firm have a warehouse at all?

Where such questioning is to stop must be decided by the inquirer. To stop too soon might lead for instance to recommending fork lift trucks in a warehouse where where movement of stock was not required. Alternatively, it might lead to increased investment in a warehouse which itself would have been better done away with. Questioning is in practice often bounded by the 'terms of reference', or limits, set by whoever has commissioned the inquiry — 'Just study the warehouse', rather than 'Study our storing and moving of goods'.

If such questioning does not stop at a preset boundary, it will lead to questions about the whole firm. For instance, why does the firm have a factory here? Why does it have a factory at all? The end-term of such a series of iterated means-to-ends questions is to be found in the answer to questions about those ends to which the whole organisation serves as means — which is to say the ends which the organisation serves for whoever is in command of it. Those ends are the 'strategic purposes of the organisation'. It was these sequences of events and ideas which led the author to the study of strategy.

The second 'flashback', in looking for the genesis of the preoccupation with purpose which emerged in the sixties and seventies in the work referred to above, is also to the nineteen- fifties. At that time program evaluation review techniques, known by the acronym 'PERT', and critical path planning, were much in vogue. I read up on these methods, in preparation for teaching about them. The literature offered striking examples of the successful use of the techniques, notably in production scheduling for Polaris missile submarines and in commissioning oil refineries.[4] There was also an industrial training film in which the methods were illustrated by the example of building a roadside filling station. Having read the books and viewed the film, I thought to test my understanding by applying the methods to an actual project. I sought to apply them to my own planning of a skiing trip.

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4 For example, Albert Battersby. *Network Analysis for Planning and Scheduling*. London: Macmillan,1964, and K.G.Lockyer *An Introduction to Critical Path Analysis*. London: Pitman,1964.

In the cases of the submarine, the refinery and the gas station the definition of what should constitute completion of the project had seemed self-evident. In the case of my trip, however, I found that I could not close the planning diagram without a precise specification of what was to constitute successful completion, and that moreover the specification was far from being self-evident. It would have been of no practical value to me to take a generalised or idealised or abstract definition of a satisfactorily completed ski trip. I needed to enumerate those elements which in my own case would constitute successful completion of the venture, for it was a plan leading to that set of elements, and not to some other, that I needed.

Reflection on possible elements which would require particular resources to be in place revealed that the after-ski facilities of bars and discos would not be needed, since I had no wish to use them. It became evident that I would need to plan back[5] from the desired outcome — which is to say, from an 'operational definition' of my purpose. Applying the means-ends questions led to asking, of the whole venture, what experiences I intended it to generate. The upshot was that I stopped skiing downhill in Slovenia and in Macedonia, and went instead to Norway, to ski cross-country on the Hardangervidda.

It was evident that one can only specify completion of a process-sequence by reference to its intended outcome. If completion is to be more than an abstraction which may or may not happen to coincide with the specific realities of the actual case, 'intended outcome' must mean the outcome intended by some actual person.

This accords with an essential of Lewin's way of thinking, namely that purpose should determine method.

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[5] A lucid discussion of the ideas of planning back from a desired end and planning forward from presently available information and resources is to be found in George L. Nemhauser *Introduction to Dynamic Programming*. New York: Wiley, 1966.

Force field models and management procedures; the 'law of the situation'

The prevalent method of management throughout the past century has been by command and prescription. Those in authority give commands, or orders, and they formulate rules which function as Standing Orders function for an army. These rules and orders are to be obeyed by subordinates, who thus function as the instruments of their superiors. The argument for these procedures is that superiors can ascertain what are the best courses of action to follow and the best ways of doing work, since by use of specialists they have access to more than any one person's limited range of knowledge and experience. A further consequence is economies of scale, since when once a rule has been established for a class of event, then action can be taken just by deciding what class or category of event the case at issue falls into. The appropriate rule can then be applied. Any event or case is thus dealt with according to how it resembles other events which are denominated as a class or category.

The person concerned in the event — the customer, the patient, or whoever — is thus treated as the event is, which is to say as an instance falling into a class or category. The person doing the work of dealing with the event is used as a sorting device, allotting events or persons or things into categories, then looking to his rules for the chosen category, to determine what to do.

This way of managing is, however, currently called by many names which suggest that it is at the cutting edge of modern practice. It is long-established — it was the method used by Henry Ford,and was made explicit by Frederick Winslow Taylor[6], before the First World War. It is, moreover, recognisably the same in its essentials as the bureaucratic method of administration often derided by entrepreneurs as a characteristic of the public services.

Why use rules instead of paying attention to 'the law of the situation'? The most commonly advanced argument for administration by rule is that rules of orderly procedure are required so as to ensure equitable treatment rather than for instance erratic, arbitrary or prejudiced administration. Establishment of widely

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[6] F.W.Taylor. *Scientific Management: comprising Shop Management, The principles of Scientific Management, & Testimony before the Special House Committee*. New York & London: Harper, 1947. (Originally published 1911.)

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recognised rules and codes of procedure does indeed protect against arbitrary administration, by precluding decisions which are arbitrary in that they are made according to the whim and fancy of the decision-maker. It may nevertheless produce decisions which, though made with strict attention to the rules, are arbitrary not in the sense of being made by whim, but in that they are made without regard for the individual person and his particular circumstances. They are then arbitrary in what the dictionaries give as the second sense of the word, namely 'having only relative application or relevance'[7]. 'Relative' means 'having meaning or significance only in relation to something else...'[8] — that is, in relation to the rule-makers, the rules, and those who operate them, and not to the person, nor in the situation, to which they are being applied.

Administration by rules has further consequences. It increases the power of those who, through their rules, use others as their instruments. Also, rules and other abstractions absolve people at all levels in a rule-operated organisation from facing and thinking about the specifics of actual events and actual persons. It is therefore likely to be more than a purely technical decision, whether to face the specifics and then apply the rules, or to use the rules to exert power and deny individuality. For instance, on entering a doctor's waiting room in the USA we were once confronted by an officious woman, costumed as if she were a nurse, who barked out 'Right! Step on the scales, please!!' When we started to tell her that we had not come for a medical consultation, but for a signature on a form for someone else, she merely repeated more loudly 'Step on the scales!!' It seemed evident that at best she did not treat incoming persons as individuals, and at worst that she furthermore was deliberately operating a depersonalising and humiliating routine to establish that she was in charge, and that patients were to be subordinate.

There is a proverbial expression 'Cut your suit according to your cloth'. Expanded, this means 'When you want to make a suit (which is to say, a set of clothes designed to fit you), take the patterns for the component parts of it, and so arrange them that they will fit onto the actual piece of cloth from which the suit is to be cut and made' — that is to say, fit what you seek to do into what is possible. The expression might be taken to epitomise the approach of attending to the specifics of a person or of an event — what would fit, and what

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[7] *Collins English Dictionary.* (3rd ed.). Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1991.

[8] *Collins English Dictionary.* (3rd ed.). Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1991.

would be desirable in the particular case — and of then accommodating the proposed solution or course of action to lie within the bounds of relevant laws and rules. This approach requires attention to specific circumstances, so that some measure of 'tailoring' to fit individual or local situations may be achieved, within the bounds of what is realistically possible — including what the prevailing rules, laws and commands permit.

The other approach puts the commands, rules and abstractions before the specifics. The initial inquiry is of the form 'what category in the rules shall this event or person be fitted into?' Whether the person or event is actually well-suited or completely accommodated by being fitted into that category, with its resultant course of treatment or action, is not at issue — or at least, it is not at issue for the categoriser. How the person thus classified may see it is quite another matter.

In the idiom of the proverbial expression used just now to refer to the 'put specifics first' approach, that of 'put categories, rules and abstractions first' might be seen to raise the question 'Would you want Procrustes as your tailor?'

Having first recourse to the specifics is what Mary Parker Follett called 'obeying the law [or, as one might say, 'the logic'] of the situation'[9] As J.K.Galbraith recently expressed it, '...in the good and intelligent society, policy and action are not subordinate to ideology, to doctrine. Action must be based on the ruling facts of the specific case'[10]. One might with advantage remove or translate his word 'must'. When he says what people 'must' do he is expressing his view that preferable consequences would follow if they were to do what he recommends. In other words, he too would like to see decisions made primarily by reference to the actual event or case, rather than by invoking faith, rules and authority to settle what to do.

To sum up: from a purely practical viewpoint, specific problems are best solved by specific diagnosis, rather than by ready-made solutions. From a human viewpoint, one can argue that it is better to treat people as individual persons rather than as things. Lewin's thinking offers advantages on both counts. Not

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[9] Henry C Metcalf & L. Urwick (Eds.). *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett.* London: Pitman, 1941, 1957. Page 58.

[10] John Kenneth Galbraith. *The Good Society*. London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1996.

only the force field graphic model itself, but also the procedures associated with using it to assist individual persons to cope more effectively with their own problems of intention and action, are typically Lewinian, in that the model has from the start been used to assist people to think and to choose for themselves, and to direct attention to the actual person and to that person's own situation as he himself sees it.

Force field models and strategy

Lewinian and Lewin-derived or Lewin-related procedures are pertinent to thinking on strategy. For example, consider the strategist's interest in 'the other side of the hill'. The expression is usually associated with the Duke of Wellington, perhaps because of his habitual use of reverse slopes on the field of battle — that is, holding his forces on the hither side of a hill, rather than seeking always to have them on the high ground, with a downward slope between them and the enemy. The reference is to a general's need to know, or to surmise correctly, what his adversary is doing — or, what is happening on the far side of the hill. The use of force field procedures to enumerate the forces arrayed, especially those which oppose or restrain, is in effect a portrayal of one's beliefs about the 'other side of the hill'.

A model, in itself, does nothing, nor is it useful until someone uses it. Its usefulness then depends on how it resembles the relevant reality, i.e that of which it purports to serve as a model. Neither a strategist's assumptions and beliefs, nor those which a person may depict in a force field diagram, are any more than fantasies, unless and until their descriptive and predictive value has been established. In part this may be done by processes such as logical or mathematical calculations, reflection, simulation, and 'thought experiments'. Such processes are internal to the person or his near environs, and do not involve direct interaction with what is being modelled. They might usefully be distinguished from validation processes which involve going out and doing something, either on a small scale, with limited outlays and risks, or on a large scale, to see if the actual results are as one hoped, or feared, that they would be.

The former processes are essentially checks on inference, and so might conveniently be called 'reality checks'. The latter are tests made by experiment, and might be labelled 'reality tests'.

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Another significant idea in the study of strategy is that of 'leverage'. The clear statement of the idea is attributable principally to Liddell Hart, who thought of it as an alternative to, and improvement on, 'direct' strategy, which essentially consisted of frontal attack. It corresponds to the sensitivity of one variable to changes in another — an idea from mathematics and applied mechanics, nowadays encountered in systems analysis. Whilst a force field model does not in and of itself embody this idea, it lends itself readily to consideration of it. The questions which one would then be moved to ask would be about the various forces, and would be of the form 'what consequences for me is this force likely to have?' and 'what effect are actions of mine likely to have on this force?' Ideas from strategy may thus be introduced into force field procedures. Similarly, such procedures can contribute materially to strategic thinking.

Force field models and 'model of self-and-surroundings'

The force field procedure serves to assemble and make explicit beliefs and assumptions, which are a person's grounds for action. The arrows which represent forces do not depict 'facts of nature', which would look the same no matter who considered them. They depict what a specific person believes or assumes is operating. They are part of the world as he sees it. Such an assembly of beliefs is sometimes called the person's 'definition of the situation'. In that it is what he believes is really so, and what he acts upon, it may be called his 'definition of reality'. It may equally well be considered to function as his model of self-and-surroundings. This formulation has the advantage that it can be integrated into cybernetic models of information- and decision processes, whilst still being as understandable as the other two definitions. In any such case, it is to be understood that one is usually thinking of some model, or some definition of part, and not of all, of the person's total 'world'.

Force field-related inquiries may be thought of as inquiries into a person's model of self-and-surroundings. The idea of model of self-and-surroundings is also of potential benefit to anyone who is elaborating a force field exposition for himself, for the terminology endorses the idea that the person is indeed reviewing not the world as it is for no matter whom, but his world as he sees it. To understand that each has — and acts upon — his own model of self-and-surroundings is to recognise the need to be always alert for and open to new evidence, so as to keep one's assumptions — one's model — in accord with

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what is actually happening. Else, one's model can drift into wishful thinking and fantasy, and one's own assumptions and beliefs may come to feel like eternal truths.

Concluding comments

Lewin's graphical models and the ideas which they embody are clearly valuable both as he originally devised them, and because they offer endless stimulating technical possibilities for further developmen. The models and their derivatives support clear and sustained diagnostic thinking about actual situations, and the actions which may be taken in respect of them.

The models acknowledge, respect and emphasise the importance of the specifics of such situations, signally including the perceptions, feelings and thinking of the person who is seeking to decide what he should do. One may well see this as the most important and lasting benefit to be had from this part of Lewin's life and work.

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