

## Emerging Organizational Theory and the Youth Development Organization

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*Management and organizational theories have undergone a significant transformation in the last decade. Amid changes that have been developing since the mid-20th century in technology, the global economy, and social structures and patterns, forward-thinking leaders in the corporate world have begun to realize they must depart from established practice and embrace a new paradigm. This new way includes management and operational structures that are flat rather than hierarchical and that are more responsive to the external environment, more flexible, and better prepared to give customers what they want. There is much that can be learned by nonprofit organizations from this business revolution, and youth development organizations in particular are uniquely positioned to grasp and implement the new model. In fact, the very principles of youth development today resonate with core concepts of the new organizational thinking.*

*This article explores the connection between youth development organizational structures and emerging organizational practice theory, using the Mi Casa Resource Center for Women and the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development as examples of organizations that embrace aspects of this new thinking in their practice. It also attempts to answer questions about the organization of the future in the youth development social science sector. Foremost among these is how we can create healthy, thriving organizations and structures that cultivate staff, programs, youth, and communities that are free to flourish.*

As long as humans have inhabited the earth, our ways of surviving, interacting, communicating, and ordering our lives have been constantly undergoing transformations. "Nothing is permanent but change," said the Greek philosopher Heraclitus. Today, no matter where one looks—commerce, the natural world, the public sector—change is the dominant theme. In the United States and other wealthy nations, every week seems to bring another technological innovation; we are growing accustomed to a continuous stream of new hardware and software that make communication faster, commercial trade easier, and information more accessible. At the same time, revolutionary changes are taking place in cultural, political, economic, scientific, and sociological structures and institutions. We are in the midst of a great shift from an industrial economy to an economy based on information and knowledge. The advancement of women is transforming both men's and women's roles in society, altering gender relations, and changing the size and nature of the family. Much of the world, apart from some significant ex-

ceptions, has embraced or is moving toward democratic rule and the protection of individual rights. People, at least in the developed world, are living longer. National economies are becoming ever more interdependent, and increasing numbers of nations are active in a global market economy. The world seems to be shrinking even as its population expands.

Keeping up with all this fast-moving change is challenging in the best of circumstances, and, to be sure, advances made in the last 2 decades have failed to reach many in society. For example, it is largely the fifth of the world living in the countries with the highest incomes who are experiencing the technology explosion; the overwhelming majority of those in the bottom fifth of the world in income have no access to a telephone, much less a computer, according to the 1999 *United Nations Human Development Report* (United Nations, 1999). And, as a report by the Benton Foundation (1998) revealed, even within wealthy countries, huge disparities—often along ethnic, racial, and economic lines—exist in the use of information technology, and the impacts of all kinds of technological changes vary widely along the income spectrum. At the same time, according to the United Nations (1999), the effects of economic globalization have been decidedly mixed: Although globalization "opens people's

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lives to culture and all its creativity—and to the flow of ideas and knowledge” (p. 4), the rewards of globalization are spread inequitably.

Still, it cannot be denied that in many places on the globe, not only are the dimensions of change today immense, they are coming about at unprecedented speed. Although change has always been with us, it is safe to say that at no time in human history has it come about as swiftly as is happening in these places today. Both the extent of change and the speed at which it is arriving have many repercussions, not least among which is that organizations must also change if they want to be successful. As one executive has said, “when the rate of change inside an organization is slower than the rate of change outside an organization, the end is in sight” (Imparato & Harari, 1994, p. 3).

Given the immensity of transformation, disorientation is almost inevitable. Although the confusion can be disquieting, this chaotic state of affairs offers rich opportunities for human and organizational growth. Now is a time of opportunity for bold and principled leadership to recreate organizational thinking and operating. New information technology allows us the infrastructure to redesign the context in which we work. We can capitalize on the bidirectional nature of today’s communications and discover what our customers and constituents are asking for; we can then produce products that are tailored to each customer’s needs. Liberated by technological inventions, we are no longer tied to the old organizational paradigm of fixed work and home schedules, with each employee working a 40-hr week. We can decide where, and when, we work. We can dissolve the boundaries of our own organizations and create new connections with an array of partners.

### Shifting Paradigms

In response to changing circumstances, the workplace itself, according to Crandall and Wallace (1995), has undergone two major shifts in the second half of the 20th century. The Industrial Revolution gave birth to the bureaucratic system favored from the 1950s until the 1980s. In this system, jobs were rigidly defined, rules and policies were strictly enforced, and a hierarchy of authority controlled all decisions. The bureaucratic design uses many levels of managers, each of whom has dominion over a highly discrete division—accounting or marketing, for example. Workers have strictly defined roles and assignments and perform tasks individually.

In the first major shift, the bureaucratic system gave way to another design for the workplace, called the high-performance system. This approach, more and more common since the 1980s, has workers on teams that individually have greater freedom, collectively are responsible for a range of activities in a business pro-

cess, and are also expected to initiate improvements to the process.

The second shift—to a virtual workplace—is currently underway. Whereas the high-performance system pushed the boundaries of the bureaucratic approach, the virtual workplace design breaks through and dissolves these boundaries. In the virtual workplace, interdependent networks of people, teams, and organizations work in tandem on work projects. In a virtual workplace, moreover, people do not always work in the same place or at the same time as other workers do, said Crandall and Wallace (1995). Made possible by the technological revolution, the virtual design uses electronic modes of communication to connect people, who may rarely come together in person, to perform various work tasks and projects. The inflexible boundaries in the traditional concept of a “job” vanish; organizational systems are designed to be in tune with the capabilities of individual workers (Risher & Fay, 1995). These capabilities, or competencies, are supported by the organization, which arranges the workforce according to them (Risher & Fay, 1995). Full-time employees use core competencies on a continuous basis, part-time employees add core competencies as needed, and, often, the virtual workplace relies on specialists who are used on an ad hoc basis (Crandall & Wallace, 1995). Both job responsibilities and authority will be continually modified; even the way we think of employees will change “as some customers and suppliers will spend more time in the firm than some of its own workers” (Davidow & Malone, 1992, p. 6).

Davidow and Malone (1992) described the virtual organization this way:

To the outside observer [the virtual corporation] will appear almost edgeless, with permeable and continuously changing interfaces between company, supplier, and customer. From inside the firm the view will be no less amorphous, with traditional offices, departments, and operating divisions constantly reforming according to need. (pp. 5–6)

The focus of the virtual corporation is so concentrated on the environment and the customer—rather than on its “turf”—that its own boundaries become blurred as collaborations are created to get the product or service produced most efficiently and effectively. This melding of resources from several organizations, Risher and Fay (1995) predicted, will mean that “interdependence will increase to the point where some companies no longer compete as freestanding institutions but rather as members of competitive networks” (pp. 96–97). Today’s cutting-edge organizations are learning that, ironically, they have a much greater competitive advantage when they are less protective of their own institution’s borders.

Not only is the workplace virtual, but so too can be the products of an organization. Unlike products created in response to the suspected needs of a hypothetical customer and warehoused until sold, virtual products are codesigned by the end user and are custom-manufactured based on specific needs and desires. Dell Computer Corporation used this mass-customization approach, manufacturing computers based on individual customers' orders to achieve, in 1999, the greatest market share in personal computer server shipments in the United States and the second greatest, after Compaq, in the world (Mahoney, 1999). To be truly ready to create the products and services customers need, organizations must begin to approach a sort of oneness with the environment.

Today's successful organization develops bifocal vision—that is, the ability to take care of today's business while “looking one customer ahead” (Imparato & Harari, 1994, p. 118). Looking one customer ahead allows the corporation to capitalize on the continual commotion in the marketplace by developing the ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances. Looking one customer ahead also means that the organization will develop an “innovation infrastructure,” that is, the design, systems, knowledge base, competencies, networks, relationships, leadership, and vision that set up momentum for further innovation (Imparato & Harari, 1994).

The ability to look forward with such intentionality and to adapt to changing circumstances sometimes necessitates leaving behind old ways of doing things. To jettison entrenched practices—and even, sometimes, today's successful products—is hardly ever easy or simple, but this “creative destruction”—a term used to describe innovation by both an economist (Joseph Schumpeter) and an artist (Pablo Picasso)—is central to meeting challenges at the appropriate moment (Imparato & Harari, 1994). This is what “learning organizations,” as Senge (1990, p. 3) called them, do. Learning organizations are those in which “people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Senge, 1990, p. 3).

### **Embracing Inclusivity**

Whereas yesterday's management structure was vertical in nature, the emerging organizational theory prescribes a nonhierarchical model. This change is due not only to the technological tsunami that washed over the world, but also to the corporate downsizing that occurred with the economic downturn in the 1980s. Seeking ways to decrease layers of management, corporations streamlined organizational structures. Even after the economy improved, the new structure en-

dured; business leaders realized that the leaner, flatter design allowed for quicker reactions to the business environment.

This flatter arrangement, which Lawler (1992) called a “high-involvement structure” involves individuals throughout the organization in the information flow and decision-making capacities. This approach is consistent with democratic principles and thus may be especially appropriate in our increasingly democratic world. It is also in line with the shift to the new knowledge-based economy, in which knowledge has a greater value than capital, equipment, natural resources, or land (Helgesen, 1999). Furthermore, new technologies themselves support a high-involvement approach to management. Flexible, organic, and interactive, today's technology pushes information, and therefore power, to those on the front lines and thus facilitates the direct communication needed for decision making.

The best approach to developing involvement at all levels of the organization, Lawler (1992) maintained, is for the organization to be structured around products, services, customers, or some combination of these three. That is, the work should be organized around “mini-enterprises” in the institution, and employees' responsibilities should be structured not so much by function—marketing, accounting, manufacturing—as by divisions that make a particular product or serve a specific group of customers (Lawler, 1992). From the individual job to work teams to the network of work processes, organizations will be designed as integrated and self-regulating work systems (Risher & Fay, 1995).

One final, but crucial, point in new management thinking: Today's successful organization has an alignment of values, principles, practice, and mission; when these elements are attuned to one another, strategies that contribute to realization of the vision are made possible.

### **The New Paradigm in the Context of Youth Development Organizations**

The social sector has for decades adopted new management and operational structures from the corporate world, and this trend is on a steep incline. It is now common for nonprofit managers and leaders to enroll in business schools to learn how to run their organizations more effectively, and some colleges and universities now offer courses and even degree programs in nonprofit management. Indeed, as Risher and Fay (1995) wrote, “It is often easier to introduce change from outside of a professional field” (p. 11). As corporate organizational thinking shifts to the new paradigm based on virtual workplaces and products, it is not difficult to see how aspects of the new design can be ef-

fectively applied to the nonprofit arena. For youth development organizations in particular, emerging organizational structures are a particularly good fit. This predisposition is based on a number of characteristics and factors related to youth development work, including the very principles of today's youth development practice. Before examining the specific suitabilities of emerging management theories for youth development organizations, let us first take a look at the field of youth development in general.

The concept of youth work is nothing new; social service agencies, religious organizations, and social clubs have been actively engaged in providing educational, recreational, and vocational services for young people in the United States and elsewhere for most of the 20th century. At midcentury and afterward, many organizations also began developing programs aimed at addressing youth problems, such as school failure, pregnancy, and unemployment. But neither method—providing services to or “fixing” problem youth—describes the newer concept of youth development. This concept, while by no means completely rejecting previously favored approaches to youth work, has a modified framework and a far broader scope.

Today's definition of youth development includes the following components:

- It considers the underlying causes of problem behaviors and stresses positive outcomes for youth, including competence, confidence, character, connection, and contribution.
- It takes into consideration the full context of young people's lives, recognizing that people grow up in several interconnecting and overlapping systems and that they are shaped by, and are integral parts of, their social networks—family, school, community, and society. Young people cannot be viewed as distinct from the full context of their lives.
- It emphasizes that everyone has a stake in youth development. Young people are underused resources to their communities; for the good of both young people and the community, young people must be involved as equal partners with adults in civic life.
- It calls for communities to provide supports for young people and real opportunities to learn, earn, and contribute.

In the last several years, many youth workers and youth-related organizations have espoused this approach to youth development. At its core is the concept of youth–adult partnership, an advance that sees youth as equal partners with adults in decision making, planning, and implementing actions. It is a connection based on mutual respect and trust, and it acknowledges that adults and young people bring unique perspectives to issues. It is also one aspect of current thinking about youth development that reflects some of the core con-

cepts of emerging management theory. The youth–adult partnership approach eschews age-based hierarchy and acknowledges that young people have much to contribute, much like how new management practice recognizes that all workers are equally responsible for—and capable of—contributing to the success of the organization.

Similarly, just as openness to change and adaptation is pivotal in new organizational theories, it is also key to youth development. At one time, youth development work tended to focus on “problem” youth and sought ways to “fix” them. Today, the work is focused on positive human and community development; remediation has been rejected in favor of addressing root causes and building on existing assets.

In myriad other ways, the nature of today's youth development lends itself to the application of emerging organizational development theories. For example, in the emerging organizational thinking in the business sector, “the key to success in the future will lie in the ability of the organization to align its organizational design and management strategy with its business strategy” (Risher & Fay, 1995, p. 20). In the same way, youth development organizations must define their values and then make sure there are no gaps between those values and how they behave.

It is not difficult to see how this effort to align vision, mission, and practice works out in youth development organizations. For this and other aspects of discussion, the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development will be used as an example. The Innovation Center, a division of the National 4-H Council, seeks and implements effective, responsive, meaningful, and positive youth development practices. Don Floyd, the council's vice president and chief operating officer, pointed out that although the National 4-H Council had long had a team whose task it was to examine the youth development field, the Innovation Center brings a new, critical piece to that work: bringing back to the organization the best practices from the field. Creating innovative practices sometimes pushes the boundaries of comfort in the larger organization. It can “cause us to think beyond what we know,” said Floyd. “Unlearning ourselves is what it's all about” (personal communication, January 5, 2000).

Moving to a new organizational design, although worthwhile, is indeed a difficult process. Such change cannot take place without major challenges to the ways things have always been done, and often it means saying goodbye to established practices and partnerships. The permeable boundaries and collaborative approach of the Innovation Center have brought both value and struggle to the National 4-H Council, said Floyd. “It is a real test for an organization to see if it can tolerate that level of learning and struggle. A tremendous relearning at the personal level is required to even think about” such change at the organizational level, Floyd

maintained. "If you're not struggling, you're probably not doing very much" (personal communication, January 5, 2000).

That kind of struggle—that is, working toward personal and organizational development—is inherent in youth development organizations. Because the mission of youth development involves continuous growth for both youth and adults, everyone involved in youth development organizations—and the organizations themselves—is predisposed to the processes and practices of the new management and organizational thinking. The Mi Casa Resource Center for Women in Denver, Colorado, houses a significant youth development program. Gayle Warner, director of the center's Youth and Career Development Program, asserted that because of the large ratio of young people on Mi Casa's youth programming staff (48 youth to 30 adults), the organization has more access to and is more open to new and fresh ideas (personal communication, January 12, 2000).

The primary purpose of youth development is to achieve positive outcomes for youth, communities, and society. For both the Innovation Center and Mi Casa, a commitment to the greater good—or, said another way, to social justice—is a critical element of organizational values. This is reflected in a strong belief in the human dignity and worth of each person, the need to share power among all entities in all systems, and the idea that the pursuit of ideals is a continuing process of change. As staff and partners strive to align all practices with these principles, the organizations retain focus, integrity, and drive. The key, then, to making the workplace effective for youth development organizations is to create work designs, skills, and reward systems that support the people, the values, the mission, and the vision of the organization. "The bonding glue that holds organizations together will increasingly be in the form of shared values and common purpose" (Collins, 1999, p. 20).

Today's youth development organizations must truly "walk the talk" of their values and principles, taking into consideration—and even celebrating and supporting—the full context of the lives of their staff and volunteers in their systems and structures. Much has been said and written about the importance of the atmosphere of successful youth development programs: They must be welcoming to all, bias-free, safe, nurturing, meaningful, and reflective of youth interests. Youth organizations and programs need to provide secure and comfortable spaces for young people to develop a positive sense of personal, spiritual, and cultural identity. In the same way, youth development organizations must respect and nurture the identities of their own employees. For example, holiday plans must honor and reflect the diversity of religious and spiritual beliefs of all workers and gay and lesbian workers must have equal access to the benefits of the organiza-

tion. In whatever way they can, these organizations should create and foster an atmosphere of common purpose, warmth, diversity, and respect in which freedom and responsibility, the meaningful engagement of all, and dynamic growth and change are encouraged and celebrated. For the Mi Casa Resource Center for Women, the diversity of the community served is reflected in the diversity of staff and volunteers, and this climate has fostered the desire to respect individuality.

Seeing young people in the full context of their lives is another way in which youth development organizations link values with practice. Staff are encouraged to search for the underlying causes and roots of issues and problems and thus to discover new, sustainable directions and remedies. Youth organizations that establish the art of reflection—the comprehensive exploration of the deeper reasons for a situation—build internal processes that are positive and dynamic. Instead of stressing control and punitive remediation, taking the wide view enables youth workers to focus on assets and resources and to create innovative strategies that truly meet the needs of each unique situation. And rather than working toward long-term, linear, and planned action, the key is fostering ongoing learning, cultivating a sense of discovery, and creating the opportunity to reflect on accomplishments, whether these are at the organizational or the individual level.

Living out the guiding principles of youth development through practice is far from the only way in which youth development organizations demonstrate a compatibility with emerging management and organizational theories. These organizations are well-suited to creating permeable boundaries, fostering interdependence among institutions, having a high-involvement structure, developing and producing virtual products, and structuring their work around products, services, and customers rather than by function. The following sections look briefly at each of these components of organizational theory in the youth development organization.

### **Breaking Down Boundaries**

The new model of organizational structure and alignment for youth development organizations is a community of interest. Effective organizations focus on their strengths and tap into the resources of individuals, organizations, and communities beyond their walls. "Inside" and "outside" the organization are defined by reference to core values and purpose, not by traditional boundaries (Collins, 1999). The value of the youth development organization in the future will be determined by the organization's collaborations, connections, capacity, and contribution to the common good, rather than by its resources or client base.

For both Mi Casa and the Innovation Center, partnerships represent a key mode of working. By working

with organizations in the community that “do things we don’t do,” said Mi Casa’s Warner, “we can together provide what people need.” For example, although Mi Casa does not provide services in the area of domestic violence, the organization works in a formal, contractual collaboration with organizations that do. And by working with organizations in different neighborhoods, “we reach different groups of people.” The focus, Warner said, is not on turf, but always instead on the greater good (personal communication, January 12, 2000).

Similarly, the Innovation Center works with organizations from a range of areas, including philanthropic foundations, universities, and youth development, community development, and other groups in finding, implementing, developing, researching, funding, and promoting innovations in youth development. The permeable boundaries of the organizations involved allow for a bidirectional flow of ideas, information, expertise, and guidance. Significantly, this allows for the inclusion of young people themselves—as collaborators and leaders rather than as objects—in every aspect of the organizations’ lives. A prime example of the Innovation Center’s partnering style is its collaboration with the Tides Center on a project called the Youth Leadership for Development Initiative (YLDI). Funded by the Ford Foundation, YLDI explores civic activism as a youth development strategy and engages young people in creating social change. The Tides Center provides administrative management for the project, and Innovation Center staff and associates conduct the principal work with the dozen community-based organizations selected to be part of YLDI.

This arrangement with the Tides Center is an important—and innovative—type of alliance, but it is not the only partnership manifested by YLDI. Indeed, from its very inception, this initiative has embodied a partnership approach. In an unusual step for a philanthropic foundation, the Ford Foundation enlisted the help of youth development and other organizations in designing the initiative. Furthermore, the initiative is constructed as a “learning group”; the dozen grantee organizations explore the usefulness of civic activism as a youth development strategy and share the lessons learned with one another, the Innovation Center, and the Ford Foundation. The customary divisions among funder, intermediary, and grantee are, if not dissolved, at least significantly diminished.

The work of these two organizations is not intended to build the institutions themselves, but rather to realize their visions and missions. The point is that although different youth development organizations will have different approaches, the aim must always be toward youth and their circumstances. Too often organizations—and youth development organizations are no

exception—get distracted by organizational empire building, turning resources to organizational self-promotion and competition with collegial organizations. Some organizations adopt a brand marketing approach as they strive to beat out rivals in a competition for attention and resources. The problem with this strategy, of course, is that focusing on brand identity based on product can distract from the focus on mission and customer service. The antidote to this internal focus, said management expert Covey (1999),

is to constantly reconnect to the true end, to the big vision. Then seek out diversity of thinking, and cultivate an abundant, open, creative mind-set toward means to accomplishing that end. Seek out partners with strengths and approaches that are different from and that complement your own. (p. 153)

Or, as other authors have written, “tear down the barriers that [keep your organization] from finding and using good ideas” (Cohen & Tichy, 1999, p. 138).

#### **Dynamic Products, Dynamic and Involved Staff**

The concept of the learning organization, which has become widely adopted in the business sector, is useful for the social sector as well. Inherent in its definition is the assumption that organizations need to change in response to the external environment if they are to realize improvements in performance. Organizations must listen with particular care to pathfinder customers—those who are innovative, who demand cutting-edge products, and who refuse to be shackled by familiar markets (Imparato & Harari, 1994). The ultimate goal is to approach a oneness with the environment. By being without boundaries, inclusive, and bidirectional, youth development organizations can not only anticipate the environment, they can be part of the environment itself.

The aim must also be to create products that are tailored to each individual customer, or, said in the language of the new organizational thinking, virtual products. In a youth development organization, this means that projects are not developed in isolation from their context and then applied uniformly in real-world situations. Instead, staff and partners work with youth and other community members who want to be included in an initiative to create a dynamic plan that is tailored to their own situation. Thus, the end users of the “product” are fully involved in its design and implementation. Although the product may—and probably will—include pieces of work that have already been accomplished, it will not be an exact duplicate of previously performed work, because each situation is unique and calls for unique solutions.

Creating virtual products requires the development of that bifocal vision that allows organizations to look one customer ahead. To achieve this, staff must be encouraged to take time to reflect on processes and outcomes and to cultivate the ability to do today's work while anticipating tomorrow's needs.

For the Innovation Center, this effort is made more possible because of a staff structure that itself reflects a new, dynamic organizational design. Although a permanent, small core group is engaged full-time, the Innovation Center also enlists a large number of collaborators—youth and adult, volunteer and professional—on project and contract bases. Reflecting the tenets of the virtual workplace and a high-involvement organization, staff members are assigned responsibility for the entire process of completing a project. The old organizational style usually passed the work from one person to another to perform various functions. But by giving a whole piece of work to a person or team to complete every function, staff use their skills and abilities and enlist others where needed; they come to "own" the process and the products of their labor. This ownership and the autonomy to do the job in the way they feel is best are powerful motivators. And because the personnel are committed to the overall purpose of the organization and they can see the results of their work, even the most mundane tasks can be motivating (Lawler, 1992).

#### Implications for Practitioners

As we have seen, many aspects of the new management and organizational thinking suit the field of youth development, including ensuring that values are reflected throughout an organization, having permeable boundaries, approaching oneness with the environment in which we work, adopting a high-involvement staffing structure, and many more. By using the many aspects of this thinking that mesh with youth development, the field is strengthened by:

- Our focusing more on the mission of our work—the positive development of young people—and less on institution building.
- Increased collaborations and partnerships, which help to spread knowledge, information, and experience while enhancing the quality of deliverables.
- Expanding our universe through respect for diversity of culture, identity, spirituality, and thought.
- Inviting—indeed, insisting on—the participation of the subjects of youth development, the young people and adults in the communities in which we work, thus making the work relevant to their lives.

Finally, but hardly least important, the emerging organizational structure empowers youth workers to be innovative thinkers, skilled listeners, and fully engaged and valued partners in the important work of youth development.

#### Conclusion

There is much that youth development organizations and youth workers can gain from emerging organizational and management thinking. Of course, today's corporate thinking should not be adopted wholesale or embraced blindly; each organization must decide for itself what structures and practices will most enable it to live out its mission and achieve its vision. These ways will not be found to be without fault; the job of the organization is to be willing to reject what does not work and be ready to adopt what does.

Change is inevitable, and today a new change occurs even before we can become accustomed to the previous one. Although it can be tempting to try to hold on to established practices and relationships, failing to adapt to change is the death knell for any undertaking. The new organizational thinking, with its dynamic structures, permeable boundaries, and protean products, allows institutions to flourish in the change that is all around us. As we move into the future, the key is to stay flexible, listen to the customer, and, above all, remain focused on and driven by the vision, mission, and values of the organization.

For youth development organizations, the new organizational thinking is an especially suitable formula. Youth development principles, which call on youth workers to examine the full context of young people's lives, require ever-changing approaches. Staying focused on the commitment to the positive human development of young people makes youth workers, young people, and their communities free to embrace the most appropriate practices, partners, and structures. And drawing on the talents, ideas, and energy of everyone involved the youth development enterprise lets loose the human spirit to discover, lead, and create a better world.

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