



Workshop: Team & Organisation Streams

Working with organisational constellations in order to deal with all kind of complicated issues in teams & organisations.

What are constellations?

Constellations show mechanisms and dynamics, that mostly work unconscious. They can give wings or they can paralyse. Everybody have seen teams or organisations with high spirit and success and teams or organisations that struggle with it. What are the underlying dynamics? Constellations can clear a matter up.

Bert Hellinger discovered this method to make those dynamics visible. Gunthard Weber in Germany and Jan Jacob Stam in the Netherlands further developed this method especially for work situations and organisations.

It is about how the total system behaves. And we know that the whole is more than the sum of the separate parts. Think about a the functioning of a human body with all separate organs with separate body cells.

Constellations bring things to light *without judgement or opinion*. It shows reality as it is, as it shows itself. People in the constellation, the representatives, do not know the situation and reflect what really is the matter. The client with the question watches it all as open as possible. Sometimes the client is asked to join the constellation. We also may do mini-constellations, where you start directly in your own constellation. Or we may work with table constellations. It all depends on the client's questions or issues.

Representatives can represent a certain function, but also a whole team or department or customers or other important elements. A constellation gives an good overview of the organisation and the wellbeing of the different parts. The representatives reflect positions and movements of the organisation system. This can be done open or covered. With the latter is meant that nobody needs to know names of people or companies involved, only the client needs to know, which representative is representing who or what.

So constellations can be perfectly used first of all as DIAGNOSIS instruments, because it is a powerful tool to get a clear picture about what is really happening. They can bring light to an essential hidden truth. There is an incredible power by looking a situation in the eye as it is and *take it as it is*.. You can experience that in this workshop yourself. Only after doing that, you can change yourself and the situation, if you want. The more you do not want something, the more it will be the case..

Systemically problems are always solutions for something. They want to be seen and understood, then new space and new ways open.

Second, constellations can be used as CHANGE instruments. Together will be searched, how solutions may look like for all relevant parties involved. For example by changing the positions and/or looking each other in the eyes, whereas earlier that was not possible.

A third way to use constellations is as DESIGN instrument to test several options or scenario's and observe what effects are being produced by the different choices or scenario's. They may also bring new options towards the surface.



When does a constellation not work:

- In case the client with the question is only curious and not really involved in the case.
- A constellation does not help to try to get away with a certain task or responsibility.
- And neither to soften the pain or consequences of reality
- You cannot use it as change instrument in a situation, where you have no influence or in order to show that you were/are right.

A constellation does work to find out:

What is really going on? And what can I, given my position, do in this situation?

And is applicable to questions, issues in or development of the following fields:

- Leadership
- Strategy
- Policy
- Vision
- Team
- Product, service and markets
- Effect and hight of Investments
- Conflicts
- Projects
- Trauma's in organisations
- Fusion processes
- Choices
- Dilemma's
- Annual Organisational Check-up: Diagnosis of the dynamics of the current situation

There are 3 basic principles at work for organisation systems:

1. **BINDING:** Systems want to be complete and everybody has equal right on his/her own place in it.
 - So when somebody or something has been excluded, it will manifest, till it is seen and recognized
 - The survival of the total system has priority over the survival of the individual members.
 - When an organisation system has reached its destiny (goal), it is finished. Or a new destiny (goal) should be set.
2. **ORDER:** Systems want order.

Then it can be quiet throughout the system, so that the members can have lively exchanges. In an organisation, there are several orders possible between the members: according to hierarchy, seniority (in age or function or occupation) or contribution. On organisational level it is important, that there is a clear order in leading principles: Who in essence are we? Why are we here?
3. **BALANCE:** Systems strive for balance in giving and taking.
 - If the unbalance continues, members will separate.
 - Or when a guilt has not been pleaded, the pattern will continue, till it is recognized.



After-effects:

- A constellation directly can give an insight or insights, but it usually also consciously and unconsciously works for months.
- A mental analysis, directly after the constellations lessens the effect, so we will not do that.
- It can be that the client with the question feels disoriented, confused or emotional. That can be part of the process, that old patterns are disrupted and new patterns are being formed.
- It also can be a combination of both: first euphoria, relief and a light feeling and later a heavy feeling again. That is, because it is easier to remain loyal to old patterns, that to change.
- It is also normal that the client is looking for a while for a new direction.
- In some cases, it is possible a client does not notice anything.

Jan Jacob Stam: "With organisational constellations it is less or not important to find the right solution. They are often more like an impulse, that develops itself later."

Do you have any questions, for example when the next Team & Organisation Streams Workshop will take place, feel free to contact Marina Wielders (MA-RE) or Bert-Jan ter Hofte (The Thrive).

Mail: marina@ma-re.nl or bert-jan@thethrive.com

Tel Marina: +31(0)6-17417100 or tel Bert-Jan: +31(0)6-51087912

Source: Bert Hellinger Instituut – The Netherlands