

## **Dear Members and Friends of "Challenging Organisations and Society. reflective hybrids" (COS)**

### **1. What is COS, what are our goals**

**COS** is designed to initiate discourse and provide orientation that will increase activity toward value-oriented development of organizations and society. The line of attack is to direct our attention to differentiations, borders, possibilities and conflict zones, critically highlighting them and pointing out their characteristics and dynamics. This is a process of formulating, of bringing into conformity challenges, paradoxes, critical questions and possible answers for organizations in interplay with society.

Global, diverse and outside the box: This journal is intended as a global platform. Its authors speak from various perspectives; it follows neither fashion nor the mainstream, but questions both. The journal may provide an appreciative and critical home for those who fit neither the norms of their disciplines nor the norms of different theories and practices, for those who like to look behind the scenes of routines and standards, for those who dare to act and reflect, for those who dare to fail and learn from it.

Language, thinking and experience are inextricably linked. English is widely acknowledged as the world language for business and science in intercultural contexts. Different first languages and contexts create a separate global, diverse form of English that connects 'local and global', resulting in English as a lingua franca. This global form of English allows movement from international to local English and back again. English measured in accordance with native-speakers' norms is not always the main requisite to work on a global level. English as a lingua franca is common property and serves interdisciplinary and intercultural communication.

COS does not aim to follow the mainstream. Out of the ordinary, a fit and a misfit in the academic world and in practice, it does not desire to follow one scientific or one writing style. Instead it provides a framework for diversity in dealing with the scientific approach, quotations, literature use, examples, etc. It is meant over time to create its own "globalish" culture for our discourses in hard copy and online. The

collaboration within this journal might challenge our cultural mind-sets. It might push us out of our comfort zones in order to get rid of rigid thinking loops and lead us to embrace different learning perspectives.

The goal is to make the journal formable and readable for theory and practice, and thus to provide for both of them alternative perspectives in the form of:

- A contradictory diversity which can provide orientation for perception and action, questioning the embedded thinking patterns;
- An upright but unquestioned, brashly courageous, seriously profound and humorously light-footed glance behind outmoded scenes;
- A glance which throws open curtains without any moralistic, condescending finger-pointing, instead struggling with perspectives and solutions, knowing all the while that there is no one perfect solution.

Our hypothesis is that this shift of perspectives and approaches irritates us and challenges us to learn. This call to awareness of learning challenges requires an increased ability to reflect by both individuals and social systems (teams, organisations, society). This awakening is an essential condition for the attainment of the ability to learn and act as an active form of participation in the social formation of contradictions in the sense of an. Through this increased ability to reflect and criticise, we break open unquestioned norms.

**The intention is to establish the scope of the journal COS with the following questions:**

- What are the future challenges in the interplay between organisations and society?
- How can we think and move forward along the borders in the areas of conflict between organisation and society, sustainability and democratisation?
- How do internationality and interculturalism influence organisations in their relationship with society? Which approaches support the perception of challenges and help to cope with them? What theoretical concepts and practical action do we need to grasp the relationship between organisation and society in all its differences?
- How can we explain the area of conflict among individual, organisational and societal development through a focus on organisation and society? Which organisation and meta-management concepts support or hinder our grasp of the interplay of organisation and society?
- What can organisations, their management, their consultants and their sciences contribute to a change in values in terms of a living and life-affirming,

positive world? In so doing, what contributions can which forms of organisation development, organisation consultancy and management consultancy make?

- What are the demands on organisations and institutions of politics, economics, science, (higher) education, NPOs, etc. in order for them to act in terms of a societal whole?
- Which contributions can value-oriented requirements such as sustainability, corporate social responsibility, democratisation, process orientation, resilience, individual, team and organisational learning organisation make, and where are their limits?
- How can we make our various disciplines, concepts, methodological approaches and mind-sets useful in an interdisciplinary fashion so that the organisations of our global society can serve the development of humanity and ecologisation?
- How can we understand the change of perspective in connection with learning? How can we change our thinking and acting through other perceptions?
- In practice, which methods and approaches for development have showed which learning motives and possibilities on the borders between organisation and society?
- Which learning and development concepts and practical models cultivate thinking and acting which can include the learning of organisations, people and society?
- How can we interweave theory and practice in terms of reflective, future-orientated acting (action research) for a sustainable and reciprocal cooperation between organisation and society?

## **2. What are our approaches and methods**

Our thesis is that this multi-layered topic requires a multidimensional approach which is interdisciplinary and linked to both theory and practice. We try to make the various truths and perspectives mutually useful by walking on the two legs of practical experience and scientific knowledge to research immanent questions as integrated a fashion as possible. The result is the generation of an interwoven knowledge that is easily accessible for theory and practice and in its turn generates profound, integrated questions and answers.

Through multidimensional, critical questioning, light can be brought into shadowy, neglected areas, light for the development of the expansion of action for people

and systems. By generating multidisciplinary knowledge, we can comprehend 'lifeworlds' in their connections and contradictions.

This multiperspectivity has high methodological demands. We want to give space and time to the mutual development of this culture, so that our work (and the journal) can:

- Make the knowledge easily accessible for the individual people (authors and readers),
- Permit profound insights,
- Lend impact to linked observations,
- Be inviting, ingeniously witty, way-out, creatively playful and full of relish.

### **3. What is our uniqueness: 'reflective hybrids'**

We are reflective hybrids by experience; as the board of the journal we are special and will make this journal successful if we:

- Interlink theory with practice and action
- Use the multidisciplinary theoretical approach - as individuals and as the group of board members and authors.
- Have a reflective and critical approach that we can strengthen by exchange and shared learning through this journal.
- Attract hybrids as writers and readers, when they feel welcome and appreciated and can find a link to their complex living environments.

#### **Reflective hybrids as target groups: editors, reviewers, readers and authors**

**Target Group Editorial Board and Reviewers:** The criterion of diversity is important in the selection of the members of the Editorial Board and for COS Reviewers. They have moved outside their "home" disciplines and achieved insights by interweaving various disciplines from theoretical and practical perspectives. They have different backgrounds – science, consulting and management – and they have worked professionally in at least two of these fields, and they come from different countries, continents and cultures. Their main responsibility is to edit and review the issues.

**Target group Authors:** People who regularly move in and interdisciplinary fashion between theory and practice. Authors who search for integrated solutions with all their contradictions and develop theory for practice. and who develop their practice from theory, so that it is of scientific interest for both the scientific community and other practitioners in similar situations. The selection of authors is the responsibility of the respective editor (Member of the Editorial Board).

**Target Group Readers:** As is appropriate to our distinctiveness, our focus is on hybrids: managers, consultants and scientists who (want to) move beyond their limits to search for long-term and integrated solutions for the interplay between organizations and society, and who want to find these solutions together with us. The readers should not be thought of as pure consumers (objects) but as co-producers, participants in a discourse in which they potentially might also take the role of authors and editors.

#### **4. Outline data for the journal COS**

- Published twice yearly (spring (May) and fall (October))
- The journal appears in hard copy and as online version
- Format: A5
- Language: English
- Number of pages per issue: 100 – 120
- Characters per article 22.000 including spaces

Feel free to become a part of our movement. Follow what happens in hard copy and online.

Visit us at our website: [www.cos-journal.at](http://www.cos-journal.at)

Join our movement in the linked-in group

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Feel free to contact us if you are interested in taking on a function in COS.

Yours

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