The impact of emotion on organizational learning

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Abstract: This paper addresses an aspect of organizational learning that has not been extensively developed – the impact of emotion on organizational learning. The study of emotion in organizations is seen as an important part of the development of organizational learning. The paper argues that attention to the emotional dynamics of organizing, and to the links between emotion and organizational politics, will increase the possibilities for understanding organizational learning. Awareness of the impact of emotion on organizational learning can be developed through an investigation of two areas. First, organizational learning is more than a product of organizational responses to individual learning. Emotion contributes to a broader understanding of systemic learning. Second, emotion is important to strategic aspects of organizational learning. There is a link between the emotional and the political within organizations. The paper contains a discussion of these themes using brief case examples to illustrate and develop the issues.

Keywords: organizational learning, emotion, organizational behaviour, change

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to address an aspect of organizational learning that has not been extensively developed – the impact of emotion on organizational learning. Emotion in organizations has tended to be seen as ‘uncomfortable knowledge’, and has consequently been avoided or ignored. My emphasis is on how learning in organizations can be perceived and understood from an approach that includes emotion. I argue that emotion is an important element in the theory and practice of organizational learning. I also maintain that attention to the emotional dynamics of organizing, and to the links between emotion and organizational politics, will increase learning at an organizational level of analysis.

There are now several reviews of the literature of organizational learning (see Argyris and Schon 1996; Crossan and Guatto 1996; Miller 1996; Vince 1996; Huber 1991; Dodgson 1993; Easterby-Smith 1997; Easterby-Smith et al. 1998) and an increasing number of papers on the subject (Crossan and Guatto 1996), representing the continuing interest in this concept from both academics and practitioners. Easterby-Smith (1997) argues that there is as yet no consistent theory of organizational learning, but rather a range of ‘disciplines’ covering different academic areas.

The theme of this paper fits primarily into the ‘psychology and organization development’ discipline of organizational learning, and it contributes to the discussions surrounding what Easterby-Smith (1997: 1090) considers to be the main concerns or ‘problems’ around organizational learning within this discipline. These are: moving...
the content of learning from individuals to collectives, defensive reactions among individuals and groups, and under-developed processes of communication within organizations. These three concerns are all part of the same issue, in the sense that the tendency to ignore the impact of defensive reactions, and poor communication in organizations, are both products of an individual focus on learning. This arises from a lack of engagement with the emotional dynamics of organizing.

In order to begin to explain what is meant by the ‘emotional dynamics of organizing’, I shall briefly outline three interconnected ideas, emerging from psychodynamic theory, that are important in moving beyond an individual focus on organizational learning.

Organizational ‘dynamics’

The term organizational learning means and expresses more than the collective effects of individual learning within an organization. Organizations, like groups (Whitaker, 1995), can be said to be more than the sum of their individual parts. To acknowledge this does not mean that an organization is reified or seen as a separate entity, but rather it makes it possible to talk about an organizational ‘dynamic’ (Miller and Rice 1967), consciously and unconsciously created and re-created through organizing, which has a reflexive impact on behaviour.

Organizing ‘contains’ learning

Organizing is a process that ‘contains’ learning, in the senses both of comprising it and of restraining it. The phrase ‘organizational learning’ describes ‘an explosive force within a restraining framework’ (both ‘container’ and ‘contained’ (Bion 1985: 131)). Any organization is an ‘establishment’ that creates rules for restraining the potential for change that inevitably arises from learning. Organizing is therefore a process that mobilizes defences against learning, as much as a process within which learning is possible.

Emotions in organizations

There is also the question of an ‘internal establishment’ (Hoggett 1992), where systemic dynamics are expressed, acted out, reinforced or challenged through individual and collective behaviour. Another way of thinking about this is that all organizational members carry with them an ‘organization-in-the-mind’ (Armstrong 1991; Bazalgette et al. 1997) which both influences and normalizes action. The organization-in-the-mind is an expression of emotional states that link the individual, his or her role in the organization, with the dynamics that are characteristic of the organization itself.

An analysis of organizational learning that takes emotion into account can develop from the theoretical framework that these three ideas collectively provide. The dynamics that are created from the very process of organizing both build and restrain opportunities for learning. Such dynamics are expressive of the power relations involved in
organizing as well as of ‘relatedness’ – the emotions generated from and generating experience (French and Vince, 1999). Emotion therefore (alongside power) is seen as a key component of organizational learning. The short case examples in this paper are used to discuss and develop this proposition.

The subject of emotion in organizations has an established literature, reflecting both a social-constructionist standpoint (Hochschild 1979, 1983; Fineman 1993) and a psychodynamic exploration of emotion at work (Kets de Vries and Miller 1985; Hirschhorn 1988; Trist and Murray 1990; Hoggett 1992; Obholzer and Roberts 1994; French and Vince 1999).

A brief summary of the starting point for the social-constructionist approach to the study of emotion in organizations is that, despite a widespread acknowledgement that ‘emotions are within the texture of organizing’, this is in itself ‘uncomfortable knowledge’ within organizations, that prompts organizational members to try to ‘de-emotionalize emotions’ and ‘make them seem rational’ (Fineman 1993). There has been a considerable challenge to rational approaches to managing and organizing within the human relations tradition. However, even here, emotions have often been ‘narrowly perceived’ (Hosking and Fineman 1990) and people within organizations have been presented as ‘emotionally anorexic’ (Fineman 1993) – having dissatisfaction, stresses, preferences, attitudes and interests rather than expressing envy, hate, shame, love, fear and joy.

The key focus of the psychodynamic approach to the study of organizations is ‘the unconscious mind’ (Neumann and Hirschhorn 1999). The approach ‘looks beyond the rational to those unconscious forces that collectively drive people’ (Long 1999: 724). It is concerned more with ‘system psychodynamics’ (Miller and Rice 1967; Neumann 1999) than with individual psychology. Although both individual and inter-personal dynamics contribute to organizational behaviour and structure, emotional experience is rarely located within an individual space (Armstrong 1991). Rather, this space is relational. A systems view emphasizes that the whole and the parts are dynamically interrelated in complex and important ways. Psychodynamic theories, therefore, have been particularly concerned to examine the link between emotions (particularly anxiety) and the creation of social systems (Menzies Lyth 1990).

The psychodynamic approach to emotion in organizations includes the identification of links between individual and collective defences and the creation of social systems. Social defences define ‘the way we do things here’ and this evolving establishment constitutes an imagined organizational boundary within which it becomes increasingly difficult to challenge the shared assumptions that have been created through organizing. Any organization can be regarded as an ‘establishment’ – a political container within which individual and collective emotions relating to change can be ‘managed’ (see Vince 1999). The idea that organizing creates establishments expresses the importance of the political context within which learning occurs as well as emphasizing unconscious emotional and relational processes of organizing. Analysis of the establishment that is created through organizing inevitably involves a focus on power relations and political processes at the same time as unconscious or emotional processes. A dual emphasis on both emotion and politics helps to locate emotional experience within an institutional context, and to minimize a tendency to avoid addressing power relations as a part of learning (Vince, 1996). The importance of psychodynamic theory to the study of organizational learning is that it provides one way of thinking about the inseparability
of emotion and politics, and acknowledges that this relationship is at the heart of what it means both to learn and to organize.

In this paper I use three organizational case examples to highlight emotional and political processes of organizing and to reflect on the impact of emotion on organizational learning. There are two areas in which the study is focused. These are:

- The importance of emotion for systemic learning – seeing organizational learning as more than a product of organizational responses to individual learning.
- The importance of emotion to strategic aspects of organizational learning – highlighting the links between the emotional and the political within organizations.

The case examples are derived from an action-research project conducted with a large, private-sector company that I refer to as the ‘Goodwill Company’. The inquiry was linked with learning and change, and designed to highlight examples of the issues, meanings, relations and politics that are characteristic of the organization studied, revealing what might be hidden, stuck, obscured or undiscussable. Data were generated through unstructured interviews with seven of the most senior managers within the company. All these interviews (twenty-eight in total) were recorded and transcribed. Initial analysis involved the identification of categories within which the data could be coded. The categories represented the emerging themes and issues present in senior managers’ experience. The focus of the next stage of analysis was both ‘checking back’ and extending the number of interpretations of the data. The participating managers were sent copies of the categorization and initial analysis. They were asked to comment and to reflect on the themes and issues that had emerged. The action-research led to the production of a substantial report.

**Emotion and systemic learning**

One of the central ideas underpinning organizational learning is ‘systems thinking’. This implies a recognition of the complex structures and patterns that are integral to processes like managing and organizing, as opposed to reaction to organizational forces or events (Senge 1990). In practice however, the designs that many organizations use to represent their notions of organizational learning – like performance management processes and training programmes – do not reflect the complexities involved in organizing, and are ultimately utilized more in the service of individual development than organizational learning. For example:

> The Goodwill Company is very proud of its approach to organizational learning. It has a training department which has a very comprehensive performance appraisal process for its entire staff, supported by programmes of training, both formal and informal, delivered by both internal and external providers. The thinking behind this strategy is that, if the company empowers individuals to learn, then it will have a workforce which is – as far as is possible – both responsive to the increasing pace of change and creative in its approach to working practices. As a result of their experience within training events, several of the front-line workers and junior managers have acted in more authoritative and autonomous ways, much to the annoyance of some of their own line managers who – while being supportive of their individual learning – quietly resent having their views or decisions directly questioned or challenged. The front-line workers and junior managers soon begin
to feel as though they are either ‘banging their heads against a wall’ or, worse, jeopardizing their careers, and that, for all the good ideas and intentions behind the company’s learning strategy, nothing is really going to change. Their experience of individual learning within the company has been good, but they have become cynical about the company’s claim to be a learning organization.

I am using this example to illustrate what I believe to be a common problem in organizations. The Goodwill Company has developed an approach based on individual learning, which is ultimately defeating of organizational learning. It has reached the point that many organizations come to, which is to develop processes orientated towards the individual without thinking about the emotional and political dynamics this creates within the organization as a whole, particularly the consequent limits on the organization’s own capacity to learn and change.

In order to progress beyond the point that they have reached, the Goodwill Company need explicitly to acknowledge (at least) one aspect of the emotional life of the organization – how threatened managers can feel when challenged, especially by subordinates, and their consequent defensive and attacking responses to this. In terms of organizational learning, the key to development in Goodwill Co. is to find ways of legitimizing challenge as an integral aspect of management practice within the company. This does not arise as a result of, for example, training individuals in the ‘skills’ of challenge, but from prolonged and continuous daily support for a critical approach to how management is experienced and enacted within the organization. To learn as an organization, the Goodwill Company will need to legitimize learning processes that question the assumptions that inform existing power relations.

A systemic understanding can emerge where there is recognition of the connections between the emotional life within an organization and the political structures created through organizing. For example, consider the following quotations taken from the action-research.

I think the big problem with the organization is that everybody knows what needs to be done, but everybody is dead scared of doing it because of the consequences and the fall out and the issues that come with it.

The organization . . . is probably guarded in terms of what openness and trust means . . . but also actually disclosing that a job that didn’t go as well as it ought to have done; we are probably better at celebrating the successes. But, personally and organizationally, we are less good at disclosing our own idiosyncrasies and our failings and the reality of weaknesses.

That sort of intelligent inquiry without fear is something that is absent from our behaviours. Of course you end up having a conversation where one thing is being said but something else is being thought.

We don’t explore the differences long enough to actually expose the differences and therefore to deal with those differences and actually understand them.

One systemic view of Goodwill Company is that the current emphasis on individual learning, while it genuinely encourages individuals to learn, is limited by underlying fears of learning and change that are organizationally established and readily reinforced though managers’ experience. The above quotations show that there are fears about
the consequences of action, fears of reflection on weaknesses and speaking out, and fears of difference and competition between organizational sub-systems. Enthusiasm for individual learning within the organization is not matched by an open organizational context within which individuals are meant to apply their learning. The broader context is rather driven by fear and competition. It is in this way that organizing within the ‘Goodwill Company’ has contributed to the creation of self-limiting processes which inhibit learning and change.

The strategic importance of emotions in organizational learning

Anxiety and learning

There is an unwritten rule in many organizations that it is inappropriate to bring emotions to work. This idea, that emotion is somehow ‘not a part of the job’ and can ‘get in the way’ of effectiveness is pervasive. Also, in one sense it is true, our emotional responses – particularly fears and anxieties – can and do get in the way, but they can also provide the basis for learning, both individually and collectively. Several authors have noted that learning and change are unlikely to occur without anxiety (Kofman and Senge 1993; Schein 1993) and the impact of anxiety on management learning has been illustrated by Vince and Martin (1993) who show how it both promotes and discourages learning (see Figure 1).

For the individual, anxiety may be provoked by having to say something difficult or challenging, by the effects of unwanted decisions, by the pressures of an unfamiliar task. For organizational groups, anxiety may be provoked by external deadlines or demands, shifts of decision making that occur in other parts of the organization, or through interactions across inter-group boundaries. In all of these examples the

![Figure 1](https://example.com/figure1.png)

Source: Vince and Martin (1993)
individual or the group is faced with a ‘strategic moment’, where the anxiety can either be held and worked through, towards some form of insight, or it can be ignored and avoided, creating a ‘willing ignorance’.

Figure 1 shows the two directions that it is possible to travel from the starting point of anxiety. In the top cycle, the one that promotes learning, the uncertainty created by anxiety can be held long enough for risks to be taken. Risk, and the struggles that it makes possible, often lead towards new knowledge or insight. In the bottom cycle, the one that discourages learning, uncertainty cannot be held and anxiety promotes the denial or avoidance of emotions that seem too difficult to deal with. In this cycle, the resistance emerging from anxiety leads towards a willing ignorance of the potential for learning and change. For individuals and groups, in that moment of feeling anxious, it is possible to move in either direction, towards learning or away from it. Anxiety therefore can be seen to have a strategic dimension, to be a feeling that may equally promote or discourage learning and change. Emotions, such as anxiety, that underpin the experience of organizing create both the possibilities for making the most of these strategic moments and the capacity for ignoring them. Individuals and groups both face strategic moments created from emotional responses to experience. This emotional aspect of organizing is frequently difficult for individuals and groups to acknowledge and work with.

Organizing emotions

The first part of my argument, therefore, is that individuals and groups continually manage and organize themselves on the basis of their emotional responses to organizational issues as well as on the basis of avoiding emotion, and that both of these have strategic implications. The second part of my argument in this section of the paper is that organizing creates and sustains this dynamic. For example:

Stephen has always been one of the most successful managers in Goodwill Company. His success has created expectations of further success, especially at this time when other parts of the business are being grown and supported by the profits his business generates. These expectations have begun to be reflected in Stephen’s behaviour. He seems never to have enough time to do his job. He rushes from one issue, one meeting and one decision to the next. His communication with his staff remains authoritative, yet it increasingly reflects this pressure. The staff around him have ‘caught’ his way of working, and they too are feeling pressured in their roles. Recently this pressure has been partly responsible for the loss of an important contract.

Stephen was criticized by the company board as a result of this situation. In addition, Stephen’s most recent ‘assessment centre’ appraisal suggested that ‘his effectiveness in any role remains contingent upon his ability to address his personal development needs, specifically those related to the management of stress’. All this has made Stephen even more determined to push towards winning new contracts, as well as maintaining and developing his status in the company.

There are several possible interpretations emerging from this example. At first sight, it could refer to the common pressures on individual senior managers. Stephen’s work became stressful and his performance suffered. All Stephen needs to do is ‘address his personal development needs’, to learn how to cope. My interpretation of the example,
however, is that the ‘problem’ belongs as much to the organization as to Stephen, and that he is enacting and expressing ‘uncomfortable knowledge’ that exists as an organizational rather than individual dynamic. Feelings of urgency concerning the generation of increased profit are an issue for Stephen, but they are also a reflection of leadership anxieties in the organization as a whole.

Goodwill Company has few mechanisms (other than financial ones) for reflection on the current state of the organization. In such situations, individual managers can become the focus for systemic issues, and their behaviour comes to represent organizational problems (this has been referred to elsewhere as a ‘blame culture’ – see Vince and Brousseine (2000)). There has been very little thought in Goodwill Company about what organizational or systemic dynamics are. Managers at Goodwill have spent many days discussing these in an emotionally detached way, by developing statements of values or discussing the ‘corporate identity’ they want to establish. These can be seen as reflections on a desired ‘establishment’, a set of boundaries that contain, constrain or guide the behaviour of individuals and groups. Organizational dynamics refers to another aspect of the system, not so much the espoused nature of the boundaries which establish and contain the organization, but how these are continually created and transformed through processes of organizing.

In terms of emotion, these dynamics have been referred to as ‘relatedness’ (Krantz 1990; French and Vince 1999). Relatedness can be understood as conscious and unconscious emotional levels of experience that exist between, and shape, selves and others, people and systems. Relatedness is based on the proposition that people are ‘creatures of each other’ (Hinshelwood quoted in Roberts, 1999) and suggests that processes of, for example, projection between people are a continuous resource, not only an integral aspect of everyday organizational life, but also integral to processes of organizing. Therefore, emotional experience is not only something that emerges within an organization, but is also a central part of what creates and sustains that system within its current organizational form. In this sense it is a crucial component in the possibilities and limitations that organizations may create towards learning.

In Goodwill, organization-wide strains and tensions about profitability and competitive advantage were projected onto a significant individual and his team, who have done well in the company and who were seen as one linchpin of profitability. Their failure in relation to an important contract was linked to a more general fear of failure concerning the continued growth of the organization. The emotions evoked by fear of failure constitute ‘uncomfortable knowledge’, and tend to be projected onto individual behaviours so that they can be more readily understood. Emotion can therefore be said to be an important (but rarely reflected upon) part of the politics of organizing.

**Emotions and politics between sub-systems**

In my first example, the Goodwill Company’s focus on individual learning, which is a reflection of power relations in the organization, has created limitations for the development of organizational learning. In my second example, the lack of organizational processes for reflection (which might involve recognizing the existence of powerful emotions) means that key individuals represent and act out wider organizational issues and problems. In both examples, yet in different ways, organizational politics have
been mobilized against organizational learning. In my third example (below), two organizational processes designed explicitly for the promotion of learning come to reflect organizational conflict that blocks learning.

Goodwill Company comprises two main organizations, one, Goodwill Public Services, whose history is located within the public sector, and the other, Goodwill Commercial, that is a combination of various, newer enterprises. In addition, there is Corporate Development, which oversees issues for the group as a whole.

The personnel department in Goodwill Public Services initiated a major development process, designed to ‘harness the energy of our people’ in this part of the organization. The emphasis was on the development of an agreed vision, a set of values, important issues and ‘a change model of things we should be aspiring to do’. Previously, Corporate Development had initiated a ‘branding’ exercise within the whole company, aiming to connect all parts of the organization, both commercial and public, under the ‘Goodwill’ brand name. Their whole development strategy was orientated towards ‘One Goodwill Company’ where the underlying thinking was that the company could be ‘Altogether Stronger’.

The history of relations between personnel in Goodwill Public Services and Corporate Development involved suspicion, envy and rivalry. Corporate Development was unhappy about Goodwill Public Services’ initiative. They thought that it was too expensive, that it was designed in a way that ‘led participants’, that it was divisive, because it related only to Goodwill Public Services and because it cut across the work done on corporate branding. Goodwill Public Services saw the branding exercise as ‘corporate communism’, since it seemed that everyone had to fit into the same box. These views were never expressed in public. Both the Corporate Development branding exercise and the development initiative in Goodwill Public Services are talked about as ‘useful developments’.

In this example I am highlighting one of the ways in which emotions and politics connect and create the organization. There is ill feeling between two different parts of Goodwill, one which considers itself the torch bearer of a continuing ‘public-sector ethos’, the other which sees the whole organization in terms of its combination of service delivery and commercial development. These ‘sub-systems’ are not openly hostile to each other’s development initiatives, but act in ways that are critical or ambivalent towards them. They do not avoid working together, but they are slow to comment, they do not know what is being done in the other sub-system, they focus on their own initiative. Both sides think that their initiative is of benefit to the company as a whole, and both sides find ways of criticizing either the other initiative or the people responsible for it. Such ‘politics’ seem to reflect a desire to keep the initiatives separate from each other so that conflicts do not arise. They fear the consequences for their part of the organization of having to work together, and find ways of ensuring that this does not happen.

Inevitably however, the conflicts do arise. They do not arise directly, and are not faced ‘head on’ so that they could be dealt with quickly, as an integral part of the daily business. Rather, they linger, for example, in the ways in which decisions are made, in terms of whom is involved and who is not, in relation to what is and is not spoken out loud and in informal gatherings rather than formal meetings. These ‘political’ processes of avoidance can have strong emotions connected to them, especially where they become habitual. They also help to create and reinforce what become characteristic ways of organizing, and consequently help to shape the behaviour that is and is not seen as legitimate within the organization.
I have noted that identified ‘problems’ within the psychology and organization development discipline of organizational learning are all part of the same issue, a tendency to individualize organizational learning. The examples I have given express different aspects of how this has been achieved, and their consequences. I have used the examples to focus on emotion as an important aspect of the theory and practice of organizational learning. I have also acknowledged that these are connected to power relations, expressed as organizational politics.

**Emotion and organizational learning**

In this final section of the paper I want to return to an earlier proposition – that the inclusion of a perspective on emotion (and its links to organizational politics) can help with the shift from an overly individualistic analysis of organizational learning and towards a more organizational level of analysis. This then also provides the means to address current ‘problems’ that are of concern to both academics and practitioners.

The three examples I have used show how ‘uncomfortable knowledge’ is produced and reinforced. They demonstrate some of the ways in which emotion is constructed as ‘uncomfortable’, as well as the consequent effects of this on learning – both individual and organizational.

In the first example, limits to the impact of (and possibilities for) organizational learning were created through policy favouring the individual development of managers. Managers’ enthusiasm for a different experience and way of managing was dampened when their hopes encountered a disappointing reality. Individuals were ‘empowered’ by the possibility of learning only to be ‘disempowered’ by the experience of acting on their learning. In such a context it is easy for managers to behave either cynically or mechanistically; indeed, this type of behaviour is likely to be reinforced.

In the second example, an organization-wide issue was seen only in terms of its impact on a particular individual (and his group), within only a part of the whole organization. The individual manager felt the weight of expectations and frustrations that are company wide, but were not overtly acknowledged in this way. Criticism of individuals or sub-systems is a likely consequence of situations where mechanisms for reflecting on the organization as a whole do not exist. A deficiency in the ability to reflect on the imagined state of the organization (or equally on the organization as an ‘established’ state) reinforces feelings that strategic leadership is lacking, and decisions are made only in relation to crisis.

In the third example, two different parts of the organization worked independently to keep the emotional charge between them out of their interactions and communication. They did this ostensibly in the service of avoiding conflict, but they instead created more complex and difficult relations out of their competition and rivalry. They established competition and rivalry as a ‘normal’ aspect of their communication and interaction.

The examples suggest that emotion as ‘uncomfortable knowledge’ is created and reinforced by organizing processes that mirror the current ‘problems’ within the discipline. That is, ‘uncomfortable knowledge’ is created and reinforced by the inability of organizations to identify and engage with the collective consequence of learning (in my first example, due to the threat to existing authority structures and/or power
relations). It is created and reinforced through the inability to reflect on how defences and avoidance strategies are institutionalized (in my second and third examples, through fear or ambivalence towards reflection on the whole or through competition and rivalry). It is created and reinforced through a cultural norm for communication that is detached from the emotional realities of organizing (in my final example, through an inability to explore the causes and consequences of inter-group conflicts). In other words, organizational learning or unlearning occurs as much through the fears and anxieties of its members as it does through their knowledge and skills.

Having suggested how ‘uncomfortable knowledge’ is created, I now want to consider three ideas about how it can be transformed. First, attempts at understanding and developing individual learning within an organization will benefit from being allied to a more organizational analysis and understanding. Such understanding can be based upon increased attempts to engage with collective emotions (for example, fear and defensiveness) as well as the ways in which power structures arise that reflect, reinforce and institutionalize such emotions.

Second, defensive reactions, both conscious and unconscious, serve the purpose of attempting to make the uncomfortable comfortable. (For example, it is often in other parts of an organization where incompetence exists, not here.) An ‘organizational’ learning can occur where individual or group projections, denials and avoidance strategies – the core of relations between self and other – are utilized as knowledge about the organization. (For example, why has a part of the organization come to particularly represent ‘incompetence’ and what can be learned from this about the organization as a whole?)

Finally, organizations will benefit where the prevalent idea of communication as a rational process is dispelled, whether between organizational members or groups. It is the extent to which an organization can create either processes or habits that ‘contain’ the complexities of emotion and relations that will make the difference to their ability to both acknowledge and utilize them in relation to learning and change.

Given these conclusions, a key implication for theory and practice within the HRD field is the need to engage with and investigate the impact of emotion on how learning is made possible or blocked, particularly at an organizational level of analysis. This will inevitably involve attempts to understand the power relations and structures that arise from organizing (both consciously and unconsciously), and how such relations or structures are created from and reinforced by collective emotional states.

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