

Playing the Dutch game of Education

Learning people to play

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The Netherlands

Introduction

There have been several conversations between us, Will McWhinney and others to initiate a PhD or Master program about Organizational Development or a related theme in Holland. During our talks we decided that the program should be focused on people with several years of working experience. We agreed to do a brief marketing study and submit both some general impressions and some specific examples of people who are interested. Will McWhinney talked about the possibilities to start a program initially as a 'cluster' within Saybrook. Eventually growing into an institute granting its own degrees.

During our reflections and talks with people who would be interested, our plans developed. This brief document contains our current thoughts and ideas to realize a path-of-change-program. Not necessarily leading towards an MA, PhD or other degree. Why not, will be explained.

1. Current Market
2. Corporate & Future Market
3. Finite and infinite games
4. A brief design of the program
5. Conclusion and next steps

1. Current market

1.1. Introduction Dutch system

Holland has seven universities, all paid by the government. The accessibility of universities is excellent. Every university offers a wide variety of BA, MA and PhD-programs. Most universities have their own private-part, which is funded by 'third-party-finance'.

For each graduated student, universities get a fixed amount of money.

Students of BA and MA programs pay only about 1.000 euro for one year, that makes about 4.000 euro to get a BA and MA degree. To attain a PhD title people follow a program that takes 4 years. They earn little money, around 800 euros a month.

For each PhD-student that completes his/her course, the university receives a fee ("Promotionfee" about 40.000 euro per graduated PhD-student).

The Dutch system knows bottle-necks . A recent research by RAND shows that Holland has little qualitative differentiation in higher education. The research-report states that there is little 'top-education', not much collaboration with international well-known institutes. There is strong differentiation of content. There's a wide offer on education-courses, from very practical to very scientific oriented programs, but the courses are not flexible. Students can follow only fixed programs with only in the last year some flexible options.

For information about the German and United Kingdom system, see Appendix I.

Strengths Dutch system	Bottle-necks Dutch system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Accessibility of higher education & PhD courses ❖ Variety of programs ❖ People that follow a PhD course get a little salary and don't have to pay for their program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Little flexibility ❖ Gap between theory-practise ❖ Because of strong differentiation in programs, much "weak" programs ❖ No PhD-programs outside the current public financed system ❖ No lifelong-education offered

1.2. PhD-programs

People can follow a PhD-education when they have an accredited master-degree. There are plans to integrate the Master and PhD-courses in *graduate schools*(Source: "Over the top: clarity by differentiation", governmental workgroup, October 2002), but this isn't realized yet.

A PhD program is a four-year research and assistant-teaching time. Some complaints of current PhD-students are:

- ❖ Little time for research, much time spent on giving courses because of shortage of scientific employees.
- ❖ Little salary.
- ❖ The accompaniment and coaching of PhD-students can sometimes be better. A research report of the Technical University of Delft mentions: proposal is of little quality, little introduction in the organization, communication between professor and student can improve, sometimes disagreement about authorship, little academic freedom.
- ❖ Powerful position of professors, and less rights for PhD-students. Professors are able to discharge or hire people.
- ❖ Large dependency promotor and PhD-student.

- ❖ Doing a Phd is often seen as a "lonely adventure".
- ❖ Culture within universities is not focused on 'cooperation' because of unbalanced power structures.
- ❖ Proposals are often in competition and therefore too ambitious to follow within four years. The PhD-student is responsible.

(source: Preserve Talent, University of Delft, see:
<http://pubwww.tudelft.nl/laioo/rapporten/BehoudTalent.PDF>)

There were plans to create a special way of coaching PhD-students, but little is reformed yet.

The average university had about 200 PhD-graduates each year, and this is going down. The duration of the PhD-program is very long: 22% of the PhD-students completed their course in five years. 77% of the people who start a PhD-program, in the future aspires a research-career (Neut en De Jonge, 1993).

2. The corporate & future market

2.1. Corporate market

The relationship between the Dutch governmental educational system and the market (the companies) is getting worse. Universities are in competition with each other and have to attract new students. They have to sell their educational products. Marketing becomes a very important issue.

In general new students see education as a highway to a career. They don't have the time or want to take the time to find essence or to look behind the boundaries of their own curriculum. They are looking for an efficient and easy way to get a degree.

Most of the students have a job and spend a lot of their time having fun. To attract students universities have to show that it does not take a lot of energy to get a degree and that the chance to find a nice job is high. Like the fashion business universities create new curricula all the time to ride the newest wave. The content of most of the curricula is very superfluous. Students can get very far by copying (using the Internet and friends).

When students start to work most of the companies have to train their new employees for more than one year before they become effective. In the first period of two years of their career the high potentials are selected. Most of them get special jobs and training. In general high potentials reach the level of vice president within 5 years.

High potentials don't like the current educational system. It is not attractive to them. They play the university game very efficiently and spend the huge amount of time that is left in other areas (creating a start-up, politics, etc). In essence they start "working" as soon as they have left high-school and gain a lot of experience. Personality and experience (and

not the content of the courses they have taken) is the most important criterion to select high potentials. High potentials work most of the time and don't like the training the company is providing. This training is aimed at the "lowest" level.

To support high potentials corporate universities are created together with "famous" business schools (for instance the Rotterdam School of Management). They provide the students with an MBA¹. When high potentials get on with their career they split in to two groups: managers/consultants that fit into the system and the so called boundary spanners. They create bridges between companies and departments and introduce new approaches. They are idealist and want to change the system. Interesting fact is that most of these people never get to the top but are very influential using a big internal and external network of comparable people. Most of the boundary spanners leave their company sooner or later and become external consultant or interim manager.

We have to aim at people that are high potentials and boundary spanners.

More general future developments

A report of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences shows that due to demographic developments, the demand for more differentiated education will grow because people prefer '***lifelong education***'. The report also tells that the distinction between initial and post-initial education will disappear slowly (Source: Learning without Borders, exploration of education and research in 2010, Ministry OCW, Den Haag, August 2001.)

At this moment the Dutch government is stimulating:

- ❖ Flexible programs
- ❖ Custom-made programs
- ❖ Dual learning courses (working & learning at the same time)
- ❖ Variety in duration of programs
- ❖ Introduction of sub-degrees
- ❖ Science parks and knowledge areas
- ❖ Connections between research-schools and education.

(Source: Grenzeloos leren, een verkennend onderzoek naar onderwijs en onderzoek in 2010, Ministerie OCW, Den Haag, augustus 2001)

There are plans for the near future:

- ❖ to give each student 'learning rights'. Students can choose their own compilation of programs/courses
- ❖ to disconnect the current financial relationship between government and universities.
- ❖ More competition between universities and other higher education

¹ Hans Konstapel was involved in the development of the Corporate University of Cap Gemini (Sogety).

The expectation is that a lot of the smaller programs will disappear because of less interest.

In the future there will be three different kinds of education in the Dutch system:

- ❖ domainmaster: multidisciplinary program focused on one specific domain, with no focus on profession or research-specialization
- ❖ professional-focused master: for ingenieurs, teachers, lawyers, doctors, dentists, psychotherapists, accountants, etc.
- ❖ researchmaster: program for scientific researchers in a variety of disciplines: a preparation for a PhD-course

and people can get different degrees:

- ❖ Master of Science (MSc) or Master of Arts (MA): master education
- ❖ Master of Philosophy (Mphil): research master
- ❖ For master-education, with a focus on professional practise (additional to MSc and MA): MD, RA, Med, DDS.

Accreditation

The programs and courses can be accredited by the National Accreditation Organization (NAO). This Organization will be founded soon in The Netherlands. Except universities and colleges, also other organizations (from abroad) can give degrees. Requirement is an accreditation in, or The Netherlands, or the country of origin. In the last case, the NAO will check how the accreditation abroad has happened and if it is according to the Dutch standards. Institutions with courses that are not sufficiently accredited, are not allowed to give degrees. So, it is important to know that not the organization is accredited, but the course or program. When an institution is accredited, there's a possibility to receive public funding, or students can receive a scholarship. It is possible to receive a temporary accreditation. When students followed a complete course and graduated, the program can get a permanent accreditation. The accreditation-test is only about the quality of the program, not the efficiency. There will be the possibility to receive a special annotation because of high quality, special international connections, special focus on target groups or a special relationship between theory-professional practice. There will be no rankings of courses.

What are the criteria for BA and MA-courses of the NAO?

- ❖ Requirements on the direction of a course: scientific or practical oriented?
- ❖ Domain-specific requirements: level of knowledge and competences
- ❖ Requirements about the education process and outcome

There exists a protocol for the assessments of educational programmes (see www.vsnu.nl, protocols).

For a more detailed report about the accreditation process, see:
<http://www.rva.nl/pdfdoc/rva-r02ukregulationforaccreditation.pdf>

We did not find any explicit accreditation information about PhD-projects.

3. Finite and infinite games

'What games do we play in the real world?'
'They're not games like checkers or chess.
They're much more complicated than those sort of games'

'How can they be more complicated than chess? That's a game of experts.'
'Well, the rules aren't set. People make them up as they go along and fight with others who don't want to change. These are the games of leaders and politicians.'

'If they make up rules I don't like, I won't play.'
'You've just entered another game. It is called economics, choosing how to use your time and energy.'

'Ok, then I'll create my own games and convince others to play with me.'
'Those are just more games. The games of invention, and of building friendship and tradition by creating culture'
(McWhinney, 1997, p.56).

The description of the Dutch system above plays within a finite game. What do we mean by that? There are at least two kinds of games. One could be called finite, the other infinite. A finite game is played for the purpose of winning, an infinite game for the purpose of the continuation off the play. Finite games are the familiar contest of everyday life, the games we play in business and politics, and in most educational contexts- games with winners and losers, a beginning and an end. Infinite games are more mysterious – and, we believe, ultimately more rewarding. They are unscripted and unpredictable; they offer people freedom to choose.

Surprise

Surprise is a crucial element in most finite games. If we are not prepared to meet each of the possible moves of an opponent, our chances of losing are most certainly increased. Surprise in a finite play is the triumph of the past over the future. A finite player is not only trained to anticipate every future possibility, but to control over future, to prevent it from altering the past. Infinite players, on the other hand, continue their play on the expectation of being surprised. If surprise is no longer possible, all play ceases. Surprise causes the finite play to an end; it is the reason for infinite play to continue. Because infinite players prepare themselves to be surprised by the future, they play in complete openness.

To be prepared against surprise is to be trained.
To be prepared for surprise is to be educated.

Education discovers an increasing richness in the past, because it sees what is unfinished there. Training regards the past as finished and the future as to be finished. Education leads toward a continuing self-discovery; training towards a final self-definition.

Finite game	Infinite game
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Winners and losers •Sharing knowledge is dangerous •Every game ends •Winning becomes more difficult •Opposite powers •Many losers, waste •Rules are fixed •Make no mistakes •Procedures, standards, fear •Compromise & Quantity • Monopolic •Threats, Incidents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Continuing the play •Help and educate •Playful •Partners, common purpose •Rules are flexible •Making mistakes means learning, experience •Dialogue •Quality •Variety •Synergy, growth •Opportunities

Title

What one wins in a finite game is a title. A title is the acknowledgement of others that one has been the winner of a particular game. Titles are public. They are for others to notice. Since titles are timeless, but exist only so far as they are acknowledged, we must find means to guarantee the memory of them. Infinite players have nothing but their names. Names, like titles, are given. When a person is known by title, the attention is on a completed past, on a game already concluded, and not therefore to be played again. When a person is known by name, the attention of others is on an open future. What is your future, and mine, becomes ours. We prepare each other for surprise (Carse, 1986).

We want to create an 'infinite' program, where people are educated for surprise. Where they learn from the past, instead of seeing the past as ended. Where they learn how to act at a critical moment.

From the outset of finite play each part or position must be taken up with a certain seriousness: players must see themselves as teacher, as light heavyweight, as mother, as architect. In the proper exercise of such roles we positively believe we are the persons those roles do portray. Even more: we make those roles believable to others. It is in the nature of acting, Shaw said, that we are not to see this woman as Ophelia, but Ophelia as this woman. If the actress is so skilful that we do see Ophelia as this woman, it follows that we do not see performed emotions and hear recited words, but a person's true feelings and speech. And only freely can one step into a role. Persons who assume a role, however, must suspend their freedom with a proper seriousness in order to act as the role requires. Self-veiling is a contra dictionary act: a free suspension of our freedom (Carse, p.17).

Infinite players do not eschew the performed roles of finite play, because finite games can be played within infinite games. On the contrary, infinite players enter into finite games

with all the appropriate energy and self-veiling, but they do so without the seriousness of finite players. They freely use masks in their social engagements, but not without acknowledging to themselves and others that they are masked. For that reason they regard each participant in finite play as that person playing and not as a role played by someone.

It would be efficient when people learn to use masks/roles easier and more playfully in their lives. That's what we want the program to be about: to learn to play six roles: expert, architect, politician, entrepreneur, inventor and artist.

4. A brief design of the Program

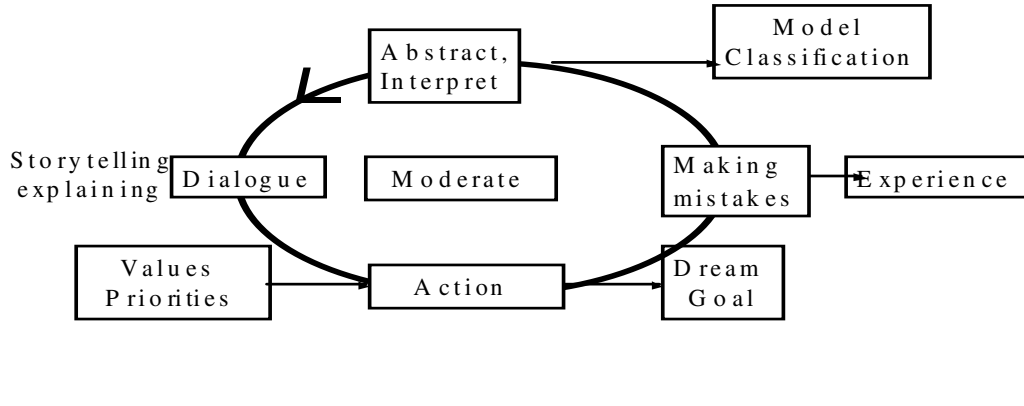
4.1. Collaborative Learning

In Florence, a long time ago, Da Vinci and Michelangelo started the Academia del Designo, where students followed a program and were accompanied by a Master. The Master already made the mistakes, and learned his students the critical moments and how to act on those moments.

In practise, the program we want to start in The Netherlands and surrounding countries, would be organized in the way the Academia del Designo worked. There will be Masters, students, and they play an infinite game around subjects, learning to play and switch roles. It is important to notice that one student will cooperate with several other students and masters. At this moment, student and master work on a 1 to 1 relationship, and that is not evaluated as positive in the Dutch system.

Students must practise what they learn. It's a **collaborative learning** environment. There will be facilitation within the environment, but no bureaucratic procedures and fixed programs. We must develop some minimal requirements for a program, so the student and master have a starting point. A goal can be formulated, and it can be changed during the process.

Collaborative Learning



In the past we had one cycle: first learn, than work. Now and in the future, the distinction between learning & working will disappear. The duration of cycle of learning and working will become shorter.

Blended/distance learning

Distance learning makes the implementation easier, yet we have to be careful. A lot of the current distance-learning possibilities, work by the conventional paradigm, that is: finite game. Besides that, the way the system engages with the student, is often in a 'conduit' way. There's a sender (learning-system), and a receiver (student), and communication "in between". We want to try to create a way that facilitates 'coupling', the dynamic between the system and student. There are some people that are trying to create systems based on a more 'experiential' system, like the Story Centred Curriculum of Roger Schank, whom we had several conversations with (see:www.socraticarts.com).

4.2. Path-of-change-based program

The roles as described above are distinguished by McWhinney, based on this ideas about Paths of Change. In short, McWhinney describes four realities people engage with.

Worldviews		
Plurality	Monistic	Pluralistic
Agency		
Determined	Unitary , policy, law, rules, knowledge	sensory, doing fact, cause & effect, goal, experience
Free will	Mythic , symbols, myths, stories, ideas, creating	Social , value, group, motivation

Determining what people believe is real enables us to better understand each other and change processes. The four worldviews based on Paths of Change (1982) by McWhinney, provides a clear set of patterns which match what we see in people around us. The four views help us understand how differently

people approach resolving conflict and managing issues.

The four views are the fundament of six different Modes of Change:

Analytic-mode: the most dominant mode of change until so far in society. Theories are translated into actions (sensory). The other way around, data from the 'sensory-world' are collected and translated into new theories.

Assertive-mode: Change in the Assertive-mode occurs by a charismatic person (Mythic) or an authority (Unitary). These leaders develop a policy that contains a new vision.

Influential-mode: this mode of change works when new values are adapted as 'truth' by an authority.

Evaluative-mode: change in this mode occurs when people explore what a group finds of importance, what it values (social), based on feelings (sensory). exploreren wat een groep belangrijk vindt (Social), gebaseerd op gevoelens (Sensory) and finding ways to distribute the values in an honest way.

Inventive-mode: A person operating in the Inventive mode, translates ideas (Mythic) into material business (Sensory), or generates ideas from data. A purely 'Inventive' person has little interest in value and practical solutions.

Emergent mode: this mode of change is about creating ideas (Mythic) that represent important values (Social) of a group or social leader.

A combination of the mode of change, forms a Path of Change. According to these Paths of Change, McWhinney developed six levels of games:

Mode of change	Game	Roles	
Analytic	Same game	Expert	Finite games
Assertive	New rules	Architect	
Influential	New values	Politician	
Evaluative	Marketplace	Entrepreneur	Infinite games
Inventive	New games	Inventor	
Emergent	New culture	Artist	

According to this, we'd like to create a program where people learn to play & switch business **roles** in the **collaborative way** as described in the previous paragraph:

- Expert or Analyst (finds core, formulates solution)
- Architect (flexibility, creates boundaries)
- Politician (finds partners, consensus, watches values)
- Entrepreneur (evaluates, feeling for marketing)
- Inventor (technology, ideas, prototyping)
- Artist (making visible, create).

Of course these fundamental ideas have to become more specific. We already worked on that, but within the range of this document goes to far to discuss it all.

4.3. Marketing & promotions

The goal is to invest as little as possible into Marketing and Promotion-costs. This will be a "buzz" program; people tell each other about it. The first students have to be generated from within our own network.

A website and a flyer are the first media we're thinking about. And perhaps a short conference about a related theme, for interested people to attend. We have experience with organizing such events.

4.4. Resources

We'd like to start slowly, and develop the ideas formulated above by trial and error. Our purpose is to start with a first-year program, with seven to ten students. Our goal is to limit the startup capital needed and generate revenue as quickly as possible. With the gained revenue, we will sponsor projects that have to do with learning to play an infinite game in society. So that as much as people possible can benefit from the program.

An estimation of our startup capital will be made in a next phase. There will be costs like: material, location, marketing, administration, Masters, etc.

5. Conclusion & next steps

The Dutch higher education systems knows a lack of flexible education programs, also interesting for the corporate market. Although there will be changes, the current system is still rigid and bureaucratic. Hierarchy characterizes universities. There is some collaboration between the corporate market and universities, but the gap between theory and practise is a big one. For us, that's an opportunity.

A PhD-program in the United States differs a lot from the current PhD-program in Holland. In Holland, doing a PhD is often seen as a lonely adventure, as a job instead of an educational process and is for people who ambiate a scientific carreer. Earning a PhD-degree has less value, sometimes even negative, in working environments.

When MA-students start to work, most of the companies have to train their new employees for more than one year before they become effective. To support high potentials corporate universities are created together with "famous" business schools (for instance the Rotterdam School of Management). They provide the students with an MBA. When high potentials get on with their career they split in to two groups: managers/consultants that fit into the system and the so called **boundary spanners**. They create bridges between companies and departments and introduce new approaches. They are **idealists** and want to change the system.

When developing a new educational program in The Netherlands, we have to aim at these idealists and boundary spanners.

There is a need for flexible, infinite and learning-by-doing programs. Life-long-learning is the appropriate term. Above, we talked about collaborative learning, dialogue, learning how to play roles within an infinite game, how to walk a Path of Change (or, Path of Education).

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- Drs. Don Kuyer. Manager Alliances, Accenture Netherlands

We have added titles although we believe titles are not important. The people we asked are have a lot of experience in diverse fields and represent huge networks. In due time the list will be longer.

Gouda, November 19, 2002
Drs. H. Konstapel & Drs. M. Visse

Sources:

Carse, J.P. (1986). *Finite and infinite games. A vision of life as play and possibility*, First Ballantine Books, New York.

Neut, A.C. van der, J.F.M. de Jonge (1993), *The value of a PhD-program*. Zoetermeer: Ministry of Education and Science.

McWhinney, W. (1997). *Paths of Change; strategic choices for Organization & Society*. Sage, London.

Interesting links:

The Netherlands

Society of Dutch Universities (VSNU): www.vsnu.nl

HBO-council (higher education): www.hbo-raad.nl

Dutch Validation Council: www.hbo-raad.nl

Council for Accreditation:www.rva.nl

Germany

Akkreditierungsrat:www.akkreditierungsrat.de

Zentrale Evaluations-und Akkreditierungsagentur (ZEVA)

www.akkreditierungsrat.de

Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA)

www.akkreditierungsrat.de

United Kingdom

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA): www.qaa.org.uk

Europe

European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS): www.efmd.be

United States

Council for Higher Education (CHEA): www.chea.org

Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC): www.chea.org

Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET): www.chea.org

American Veterinary Medical Association: www.chea.org

Appendix I

United Kingdom and Germany

The Dutch system is different than the UK and German system.

The United Kingdom has 115 universities. There are also about 60 other higher education organizations, where people follow courses without getting a degree. All the universities are largely public financed and are ruled by a Board of Governors. The English Higher Education system has a "dual" finance system. The Funding Councils (England, Wales, Scotland and North-Ireland), divide the money between the organizations, for both education as research. This resource covers about 33% of the research expenses. And the Research Councils (six), they divide the money for strategic fundamental research; this resource covers 25% of the research expenses. All the other activities are financed by charity (14%), governmental contracts (11%), business (7%) and European Union (5%).

In Germany there are "Hochschulen". This are both universities as other higher education. At this moment Germany has 375 Hochschulen, of which 84 universities and 104 Staatliche Fachhochschulen; besides that Germany knows 26 Berufsakademien, comparable to the Dutch "leerlingwezen" but then more extensive. Besides that Germany has about 143 more little higher educational schools. The Fachhochschulen offer a more practical oriented education than universities do. They are comparable with the Dutch 'Hogescholen'. The "Lander" have the responsibility for the Hochschulen. Germany is introducing competition in the higher education system and the transfer of technology is stimulated a lot. The system depends on government finance (90%).