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## Order and Format of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i</th>
<th>Title page</th>
<th>Page 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Statement of Access</td>
<td>Page 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Extended Abstract</td>
<td>Page 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>Page 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>Statement of Prior Comalco Employment</td>
<td>Page 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>Page 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
<td>List of Illustrations and Diagrams</td>
<td>Page 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii</td>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>Page 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix</td>
<td>Signed Statement of Sources</td>
<td>Page 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Declaration on Ethics</td>
<td>Page 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi</td>
<td>Main Text</td>
<td>Page 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xii</td>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>Page 297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiii</td>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>Page 331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Ronald Paul Lynch
Carnegie, Jaques and Requisite Organisation: 
A meeting of minds at Conzinc RioTinto Australia 
1977 - 1993

Keywords: Organisational Change Management, Sir Roderick Carnegie, Elliott Jaques, Conzinc Riotinto Australia, Requisite Organisation, John Kotter, Organisational Development, Comalco Weipa, five Stratum business unit model, Stratified Systems Theory, a meeting of minds, Time Span of Discretion, Case study, Qualitative, Award restructuring, Salaried staff employment

This thesis, Carnegie, Jaques and Requisite Organisation: A meeting of minds at Conzinc Riotinto Australia, 1977 - 1993 endorses the OD intervention at CRA as a unique journey undertaken between two extraordinarily intelligent individuals, at a specific intersection of their working lives that, over time, resulted in a restructured global mining house and the subsequent birth of Requisite Organisation in 1989. The study aim melded the core parameters of Carnegie, Jaques, Organisation Development and Kotter into a meaningful research challenge, to analyse the Carnegie/Jaques Organisation Development intervention at Conzinc Riotinto Australia through the lens of Kotter’s eight step Organisational Change Process.

Working in and researching organisational change management in the Australian mining industry remains a personal journey that spans three decades. Engagement during this era consisted of firstly CRA/Comalco (in staff operational and support roles) and the Queensland energy sector (interfacing with the sugar and mining sectors) in Queensland. Lastly with a climate change management consultancy consulting to Australia’s largest mining companies on climate change strategies, carbon pricing, emissions intensive trade exposed (EITE) energy models and electrical, fuel and carbon mitigation strategies in Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia.

This thesis builds on mining industry research undertaken by Swain (1995), Ludeke (1996) and Hearn Mackinnon (2004). It converges on organisational change management as a business imperative over an extended period within the CRA group. Swain’s PhD compared and contrasted Industrial Relations Strategy within CRA, BHP and Robe River Associates in Western Australia. Ludeke researched Comalco in Queensland, Tasmania and New Zealand, based around a legalistic perspective relating to the offer of salaried staff employment. Hearn
Mackinnon’s PhD on CRA researched Strategic Management and Employee Relations principally focusing on the concept of managerial prerogative.

The primary research methodology employed is a single qualitative case study. The case study is buttressed by triangulation of interviews and focus groups, analysis of documentation, stakeholder analysis and participant observation. Love’s (2002) seven aspect model is introduced as an anchor point for the methodological analysis and selection of a study hypothesis. Theories scrutinised were ontological perspective(s), epistemological perspective(s), methodological perspectives, research methodologies, research methods, data-gathering and analysis techniques. Ontological and epistemological assumptions are identified as a key intersection in determining choices available from which to select a methodology. Qualitative and quantitative templates were compared and contrasted, with qualitative chosen as the companion to a core case study model of inquiry because of the adeptness of qualitative research to embrace a case study model with a study narrative.

The literature review undertaken in Chapter 2 is described as the first among equals within a trilogy of chapters informing both the research question and methodology. Outcomes of the literature review steered the development of the study aim buttressed by six enabling questions. The methodology chosen is elaborated on in Chapter 3. The core chapters of the study, four through to eight, are identified as the early years, trials of the process, the five stratum business unit model, systems leadership development, award restructuring and the offer of salaried staff employment to the award employees. Chapter 9 correlated the enabling objectives with the study aim to produce the research outcomes and suggestions for additional research. Literature disparities were identified relevant to the OD intervention and these omissions established the knowledge gap fundamental to any rigorous academic endeavour.

Organisational change management was chosen as the intellectual hypothesis umbrella under which the study parameters were opened. The philosophy and necessity to radically change the strategic direction of companies by a significant change management intervention is noted with the 1970s being a watershed in international economic development in Australia ACIRRT 1999). Greiner and Cummings (2004) described OD as a model of change management that applies behavioural science knowledge to the planned change and development of an organisation. Change management on this scale can involve strategy realignment, structural and organisational transformation, process redesign, culture realignment, organisational behaviour and leadership development. An OD change management intervention may be predicated on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the business to deliver superior goods and services to its internal and external customers.
The period under research was pinpointed within a background of ongoing and relentless organisational change occurring throughout the company between 1970 and 2008. An exploratory literature search identified 1977 - 1986 as the organisational development intervention period within the company. This beginning of the change phase was initiated by the Chief Executive Officer Sir Roderick Carnegie. Professor Elliott Jaques from the Brunel Institute of Social Sciences (BIOSS) in the United Kingdom was invited to contribute to theory development within the project after Carnegie had read Jaques’ book, *A General Theory of Bureaucracy*. Carnegie has often remarked that his ‘crossing of the Rubicon’ or ‘Ah-ha moment’ occurred when reading this book. Carnegie’s intellect was aroused by Figure 10.7, growth of individual capacity, on p. 173. This was the beginning of the Carnegie/Jaques professional, intellectual and personal relationship that endured the passage of time up until Jaques passed away in 2003.

Jaques was a psychoanalyst, organisational theorist and management consultant, and was retained by Carnegie on behalf of CRA to test Stratified Systems Theory within the company. The timeframe of 1987 - 1993 involved a multiplicity of corporate initiated projects following the OD phase. Projects included integration of Stratified Systems Theory within business units and the executive group, systems leadership training and development, continuous improvement and investigating options for a futuristic model of remunerating the award workforce.

The study’s aim for the OD intervention at CRA is achieved within an overarching framework of Kotter’s theories on organisational change processes. The theoretical approach firstly engaged the eight steps to transforming your organisation, and secondly investigated the generic change management theories advocated in leading change in organisational development within CRA. Kotter notes that successful change begins when individuals look at a company’s competitive situation, market position, technological trends and financial performance. Companies also change by moving through a phase or steps that usually require a considerable period of time. This focus on successful change management strategies is consistent with CRA’s nine year transition to a RO structured organisation.

Six enabling objectives underpinned the research aim: (i) identify significant factors contributing to the establishment of the OD intervention project in 1979, (ii) analyse the linkages between the OD trials at three CRA mine and process plants and the go/no-go decision trigger for the project, (iii) analyse a typical OD implementation at the Raw Materials Business Unit (the world’s largest bauxite mine) at Comalco Weipa, (iv) appraise the implementation of system leadership training and development (T & D) following on from the Carnegie/Jaques’
OD intervention, (v) expand on stage seven of Kotter’s model (producing still more change) to analyse the offer of salaried staff employment to the award workforce in the company’s metalliferous mine and process operations, (vi) develop a model for organisational change intervention in the Australian mining industry based around Requisite Organisation (RO) principles, and Kotter’s eight step change model.

The outcomes of the research built from the six enabling objectives engendered conclusive outcomes. A three stage change management model based on Requisite Organisation principles, unique facets of the initial OD intervention template, Kotter’s eight step change process, combined with learnings from this study and RioTinto’s ‘Mine of the Future’™ was developed. An expanded six stage prerequisite template melds Kotter’s eight step change management process with five additional pre-conditions, embedded within a modified Swiss cheese prototype. Ongoing learning and development, combined with systems leadership structured courses, highlighted an essential embedded element. The criticality of melding structure, organisation process and people at work together is integrated seamlessly into the process.

The significant factors contributing to the establishment of the OD intervention project in 1979 were noted as a business imperative from the office of the CEO. Carnegie believed the corporation was in danger of a takeover, owned and operated a number of sites that were basket cases, and had fallen behind the Canadians in undertaking benchmarking trials. The linkages between the OD trials at three CRA mine and process plants and the go/no-go decision trigger for the project were identified from initial work undertaken at Woodlawn in New South Wales. Outcomes highlighted the importance of conducting one or more pertinent trials to test a change management intervention before implementing companywide change. The organisation change trial model allows a business to assess the impacts and outcomes of a change process under a controlled situation.

Analysing a typical OD implementation at the Raw Materials Business Unit mine site at Weipa showcased the theories being implemented at a world class mineral deposit. Carnegie frequently raised the issue of the ‘Broken Hill Mine Managers’ Club’ being an impediment to moving forward with new ideas at the executive level. In Weipa the equivalent was the ‘Superintendents’ Group’. The Supervisor’s role evolved into an on-going debate between site management and the OD project team as well as consuming an inordinate amount of project and management time. Strong leadership carried the day and the restructure was perceived to be successful. The implementation of system leadership training and development, following
from the Carnegie/Jaques’ OD intervention, was generally known as stage two of the process. Leadership development continued through to 2004.

The study expanded on stage seven of Kotter’s change management process (producing still more change) to analyse the offer of salaried staff employment to the award workforce in the company’s metalliferous mine and process operations. This was a two stage process and disclosed that the failure of the award restructuring process led directly to the option of looking at alternative methods of remunerating the award workforce. The workforce was offered salaried staff employment in late 1993.

The thesis is not an end in itself. Researching organisation change management relating to CRA/Comalco, now known as RioTinto, and the mining industry generally is ongoing. The wrapping up of this study opens the door to complementary inquiry based around the Australian mining industry.
This dissertation is unreservedly dedicated to my wife Alison for her support, patience, backing and perseverance.

I would like to register my sincere thanks to the following people for their assistance, knowledge, patience, good humour and counsel:

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Finally, this work remains my own. The interpretation given to events and outcomes combined with the emphasis placed on particular aspects, individuals, timeframes and conclusions is mine alone, and accordingly I assume full responsibility and accountability for the final thesis as written.
Statement of Prior Employment with Comalco at Weipa

This is to state that the author of this thesis Ronald Paul Lynch was a salaried staff employee of Comalco Minerals and Alumina at the Weipa mine site between December 1981 and September 1994.

............................................  ............................................
Signature  Date

Ronald Paul Lynch
Chapter 1: Introduction
1.0 Chapter content
1.1 Rationale for the study
1.2 Background to the study
1.3 Organisational change and the theories of Kotter
1.4 Conzinc Riotinto Australia (CRA) background
1.5 Elliott Jaques’ background
1.6 Australian research on Conzinc Riotinto Australia and Elliott Jaques
1.7 Methodology
1.8 Organisation of the study
1.9 Scope of the study
1.10 Chapter summary

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature: Theoretical Foundations
2.0 Chapter content
2.1 Overview
2.2 The Literature Review
2.3 Organisational change management
2.4 Research of Elliott Jaques: an overview
2.5 Chapter summary

Chapter 3: Methodology
3.0 Chapter content
3.1 Relationship to previous chapters
3.2 Theoretical Perspectives
3.3 Theoretical framework underpinning this study
3.4 Case Study
3.5 Qualitative and Quantitative
3.6 Methods
3.7 Outcomes
3.8 Chapter summary

Chapter 4: Embryonic Phase: CRA Australian Requisite Organisation Project
4.0 Chapter overview
4.1 The early years: Carnegie and McKinsey
4.2 The merger
4.3 CRA: 1970 - 1977
4.4 Establish a sense of urgency
4.5 Create a guiding coalition
4.6 Develop a vision and strategy
4.7 Communicating the change vision
4.8 Implications of research
4.9 Chapter summary

Chapter 5: Organisational Development (OD) Team in Weipa: 1984-86
5.0 Chapter overview
5.1 Why select Comalco Weipa early in the OD cycle?
5.2 OD team dispatched to Weipa
5.3 OD team charter
5.4 Weipa business unit structure
5.5 Jaques in Weipa
5.6 Managing Director
5.7 MRUs replace departments
5.8 Final Raw Materials business unit structure
5.9 Individual contracts and Jaques
5.10 Implications of research
5.11 Chapter review

Chapter 6: Organisational Processes and People at Work
6.0 Chapter overview
6.1 Background to organisational processes and people at work
6.2 Organisational processes and people at work
6.3 Example of a Working Together Course at Comalco Weipa
6.4 Career Development within a Business Unit
6.5 Implications of research
6.6 Chapter summary

Chapter 7: Factors contributing to the offer of salaried staff employment
7.0 Chapter overview
7.1 Kotter’s eight step organisational change model
7.2 Original CRA appointed General Manager at Weipa
7.3 Award restructuring not delivering
Chapter 7:  Communication transparency and effective models

7.4 Communication transparency and effective models
7.5 Business unit review
7.6 Retrenchments
7.7 New Zealand aluminium smelter visit
7.8 Paid rates versus minimum rates
7.9 Abolition of the closed shop
7.10 Implications of research
7.11 Chapter summary

Chapter 8:  Transition to staff employment

8.0 Chapter overview
8.1 Kotter’s (1996) eight stage organisational change model
8.2 Background to the offer of salaried staff conditions of employment
8.3 Salaried Staff
8.4 Staff employment offered to FCU members
8.5 Kaolin operations 1985 - 1996
8.6 Bauxite operations ring fenced
8.7 Power and electrical services
8.8 Free riders in an IR Context
8.9 Implications of research
8.10 Chapter summary

Chapter 9:  Conclusions and Recommendations

9.0 Chapter content
9.1 Study aim and objectives
9.2 The elephant in the room
9.3 Outcomes of research enabling objective (i)
9.4 Outcomes of research enabling objective (ii)
9.5 Outcomes of research enabling objective (iii)
9.6 Outcomes of research enabling objective (iv)
9.7 Outcomes of research enabling objective (v)
9.8 Outcomes of research enabling objective (vi)
9.9 Identify linkages between the literature review, thesis aim and enabling objectives
9.10 Recommendations arising from the study
9.11 Limitations of the study
9.12 Chapter summary
vii Listing of Illustrations and Diagrams

Figure 1.1: Positioning of the study between theory development and the RO model
Figure 1.2: Brunel University: Memorials to Jaques and Brown
Figure 1.3: CRA corporate activities timeline 1970 - 2008
Figure 1.4: Linking study aims and outcomes to Kotter’s (1996) change process
Figure 1.5: Comalco operations at Weipa in Queensland, Australia
Figure 1.6: Flying wedge model used to identify gaps in the Jaques’ literature
Figure 1.7: RO model development over time
Figure 1.8: Breakdown of interview study categories and acronyms applied for anonymity
Figure 1.9: Triangulated research model
Figure 1.10: Nine chapter study outline
Figure 2.1: Trilogy of preliminary chapters - introduction, literature review and methodology
Figure 2.2: Literature review personal challenges
Figure 2.3: Change management lens model, study aims, methodology and study outcomes
Figure 2.4: Mckinsey 7-S model
Figure 2.5: Types of environmental organisational change
Figure 2.6: Enduring skills of change manager’s model
Figure 2.7: Three horizons change model
Figure 2.8: The organisational hologram design process
Figure 2.9: Field Theory in Social Science
Figure 2.10: Adaption of Kotter’s eight step change process implanted within the change lens
Figure 2.11: Flying wedge model employed to identify gaps in the Jaques’ literature
Figure 2.12: Cluster of Jaques’ early theories
Figure 2.13: Timeline of key corporate activities
Figure 2.14: Objectives to outcomes
Figure 3.1: Theoretical perspectives
Figure 3.2: Cluster of Jaques’ early theories
Figure 3.3: Inductive and deductive as a recursive cycle of steps
Figure 3.4: Research strategy based around a Case Study Core
Figure 4.1: Integration of Kotter’s first four steps with the embryonic phase
Figure 4.2: Establish a sense of urgency
Figure 4.3: Original diagram on available capacity levels
Figure 4.4: Organisation philosophy model developed by Carnegie
Figure 4.5: Group executive structure reporting to the CEO
Figure 4.6: Developing a vision and strategy
Figure 4.7: Woodlawn mine project team structure
Figure 4.8: Business unit model rolled out across CRA
Figure 4.9: Communicating the change vision
Figure 4.10: Interlocking aspects of executive communication
Figure 4.11: Six variations of human networks found in organisations
Figure 4.12: Integration of Kotter’s first four steps with the embryonic phase at CRA
Figure 5.1: Stage 1-4 of Kotter’s change management model
Figure 5.2: Integration of Kotter’s fifth and sixth steps with the OD intervention
Figure 5.3: Minerals Products business unit locations at Brisbane, Cairns and Weipa
Figure 5.4: Scale of change management model
Figure 5.5: Comparison between structure pre and post OD intervention
Figure 5.6: Five stratum business unit structure
Figure 5.7: Weipa OD structure
Figure 5.8: Mutual recognition unit (MRU)
Figure 5.9: Service role in respect of output team relationships
Figure 5.10: Staff role displaying interaction between operating and service functions
Figure 5.11: Stratum VI interacting with head office structure at stratum VI and VII
Figure 5.12: Summary of the pressures surrounding the front line Supervisor role
Figure 5.13: Supervisor’s balancing act between systems and people in the workplace
Figure 5.14: Outline of stratum versus accountabilities
Figure 5.15: Business unit functional model
Figure 5.16: Raw Materials business unit structure
Figure 5.17: Kotter’s 5th and 6th steps in the Weipa OD intervention
Figure 6.1: Step five and step six researched in chapter five
Figure 6.2: Integration of Kotter’s step seven and eight
Figure 6.3: Three step Requisite Organisation Model
Figure 6.4: Steps seven and eight from Kotter
Figure 6.5: Relationship between SST, working together course, five stratum business unit model
Figure 6.6: Core values model introduced during working together course
Figure 6.7: Making sense of culture through a mythological lens
Figure 6.8: Requisite Organisation Model
Figure 6.9: Steps seven and eight from Kotter
Figure 7.1: Kotter’s eight stage organisational change model
Figure 7.2: CRA Business unit organisational model 1991
Figure 8.1: Kotter’s eight stage organisational change model
Figure 8.2: Hertzberg’s two-factor theory
Figure 8.3: Simplified five stratum business unit model
Figure 8.4: Overlapping thirty per cent pay bands at stratum I
Figure 8.5: Individual salary band identifying scope for progression - low, mid and high
Figure 8.6: Continuum of anarchy through to mutual trust
Figure 8.7: Plaque in the town centre Weipa commemorating the history of kaolin
Figure 8.8: Power and electrical services department line diagram
Figure 8.9: Weipa Power Station organisation structure
Figure 8.10: Electrical workshop organisation structure
Figure 8.11: Electrical line crew reporting to the workshop Supervisor
Figure 8.12: Theoretical implications for further research model
Figure 9.1: OD intervention positioning the study between theory development and the RO model
Figure 9.2: Linking study aims and outcomes to Kotter’s (1996) change management process
Figure 9.3: Linkages between Glacier Metals, Conzinc Riotinto and Requisite Organisation
Figure 9.4: Diagram on available capacity levels
Figure 9.5: Woodlawn mine project team structure
Figure 9.6: Integration of Kotter’s first four steps with study objectives (i) and (ii)
Figure 9.7: Raw Materials business unit structure
Figure 9.8: Kotter’s 5th and 6th step in the Weipa OD intervention
Figure 9.9: Steps seven and eight
Figure 9.10: Punctuated Equilibrium at CRA from 1970 to 2008
Figure 9.11: Prerequisites passing through six interrelated plates to emerge as inputs into stage two
Figure 9.12: Epitomises ‘Organisation Structure’ as the first among equals in the RO model
Figure 9.13: Melds ‘Organisation Process’ and ‘People at Work’ together
Figure 9.14: Introduces ‘a mine of the future’ suggested model
Figure 9.15: Trilogy of preliminary chapters - introduction, literature review and methodology
Figure 9.16: Adaption of Kotter’s eight step change model implanted within the change lens
Figure 9.17: Flying wedge model used to identify gaps in the Jaques literature
Figure 9.18: Thesis aim underpinned by six enabling objectives
Figure 9.19: Schematic of Elliott Jaques’ research output

viii List of Tables

Table 1.1: Kotter’s eight steps process to transforming the organisation
Table 1.2: Scope of study
Table 2.1: Change strategies of sample organisations
Table 2.2: Kotter’s eight step process for organisational transformation
Table 2.3: Kepner-Tregoe decision analysis
Table 2.4: Principal locations for Jaques research papers access
Table 2.5: Seven stratum expanded management accountability hierarchy
Table 3.1: Philosophical paradigms used for the research
Table 3.2: Observations and reflections on a case study
Table 3.3: Data situation and the need for triangulation
Table 3.4: Stakeholder analysis research investigation
Table 3.5: Cross section of typical interviews undertaken
Table 3.6: Interview cluster grouping for study
Table 3.7: Methods of validity in Qualitative Inquiry
Table 4.1: RO research in the US Military from 1978-1988
Table 4.2: Suggested stratum levels within a CRA autonomous business unit
Table 5.1: Titles and department names in common usage in 1984
| Table 5.2: | Permanent membership of the OD Raw Materials project team |
| Table 5.3: | Five distinct cultural periods |
| Table 5.4: | Weipa staff numbers by stratum |
| Table 5.5: | Relationship between GM and Manager |
| Table 5.6: | Accountability and authority levels for Superintendents and Supervisors |
| Table 6.1: | Structure of a typical one week course |
| Table 6.2: | Dissection of a typical working together course |
| Table 6.3: | Expanded seven stratum managerial hierarchy definitions |
| Table 6.4: | Stages of career development |
| Table 7.1: | Multi-faceted communication channels in Weipa |
| Table 7.2: | Nature, size and breadth of downsizing between 1990 and 1995 |
| Table 7.3: | Jobs lost due to downsizing in Australian companies between 1990 and 1995 |
| Table 7.4: | Percentage of employees in closed shop arrangements |
| Table 7.5: | Non-trade grading structure level one to five inclusive |
| Table 7.6: | Workforce distribution by union affiliation at Weipa 1991 |
| Table 8.1: | Accommodation styles in the Weipa township 1993 |
| Table 8.2: | Twelve level award classification structure |
| Table 8.3: | Employment profile of power and electrical services department, June 1993 |
| Table 8.4: | Table of contents: Transition to the Salaried Staff Employment System |
| Table 8.5: | Outline of the personal effectiveness review process workshop |
| Table 8.6: | Profile of power and electrical services department early 1994 |
| Table 9.1: | Kotter’s eight steps to transforming the organisation |
| Table 9.2: | Recommended stratum levels within a CRA autonomous business unit |
| Table 9.3: | Breakdown of a typical working together course |
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I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another Degree or Diploma at any University or other institution of Tertiary Education.

Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided.

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Signature                                          Date

Ronald Paul Lynch
The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted within the guidelines for research ethics outlined in the *National Statement on Ethics Conduct in Research Involving Human (1999)* the Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice (1997), the *James Cook University Policy on Experimentation Ethics. Standard Practices and Guidelines (2001)* and the *James Cook University Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice (2001).*

The proposed research methodology received clearance from the James Cook University Experimentation Ethics Review Committee:

Approval number: H1162

Signature:

Name: Ronald Paul Lynch

Date: