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## Contemporary Organization and a Perspective on Integration and Development

**JEL Classification:** L20; D21; D23

**Keywords:** *systemic approach; know-why methodology; integration; development*

**Abstract:** *The modern organization is becoming more complex and dynamic. Handling such an organization often requires new solutions in order to quickly counter complexity in economy, politics and private life sectors. The cure to this situation may be understanding the complex connections between elements in the system. Thereupon, in the article the modern organization is presented with the use of a network using know-why type thinking as also a model of an effective system taken from nature, which refers to two determinants – integration and development. The aim of the article is an attempt to answer the question what conditions have to be fulfilled, for the organization to give a feeling of integration and development with a detailed focus on the balance between the two factors.*

## Introduction

Effective management is currently a vital term to achieving competitive advantage. The modern organization must constantly react to changes in its environment, especially to strong competition and the growing requirements of its customers. It is becoming more complex and dynamic. During management, one may be close to achieving an optimum status only when web links and interpenetrations of decision problems are handled as a whole. That is why management must be a comprehensively led process of full leadership of an organization.

Currently, the insecurity, complexity and variability of the world is so big that both complex and smaller problems which people must face stay unresolved (Honegger, 2008, p. 21). This causes the natural need to find new solutions, to quickly counter the fast growing complexity in the economy, in science, the society, politics and private lives. Many authors applying the systemic approach such as G. Probst, P. Gomez, H. Ulrich, H. Vettiger, F. Vester, J. O'Connor, I. McDermott, E. Laszlo emphasize that the countermeasure to improving the situation is to understand the complex links between the elements in the system. K. Neumann also encourages to reflect the links in the system, in order to take many factors into account and detect the codependence between them while planning and making decisions. This leads not only to analyzing the simple cause and effect relations. The mentioned author, basing on theoretical foundations of web approach and systems theory, created a know-why methodology, thanks to which one may research how systems, their parts and relations between them function (Neumann, 2012, p. 11). The know-why methodology is then an attempt to understand the individual situation of an enterprise by presenting interactions between factors in the form of a link web (Neumann, 2009, p. 17).

In the know-why thinking as a base, a model is used of an effective system taken from the nature, which refers to two determinants – integration and development. Therefore, the aim of the article is to answer the question what conditions have to be fulfilled, for the organization to give a feeling of integration and development with a detailed focus on the balance between the two factors. A modern organization is presented in the article with the use of networks using the know-why methodology.

## **Research Methodology**

In the article, a network-thinking methodology has been used as well as its improved version in the form of the know-why methodology, which allows for understanding of processes and occurrences in different situations, especially those which are dynamic, unintelligible and cumbersome. The chosen methodology has a systemic genesis, while its authors use concepts and determinations of the systems theory, in which the basic paradigm is a wide and full perception and study of the world (Zimniewicz, 2003, p. 134). Its practical implementation *inter alia* allows us to obtain the appropriate definition of the problem as also discovering how the systems function not only in the static form but also in the dynamic and thanks to which processes (mostly not visible) they change, simultaneously changing their environment. These processes are often ignored during direct observations.

Modern organizations take the form of more complex and dynamic systems, which function in an uncertain and turbulent environment. It is important to understand their nature and, in relation with that, to take comprehensive actions which are capable of subsuming development and dynamics. Understanding their nature and undertaking actions in this congeneric system requires methods which are capable of subsuming their dynamics. A network approach allows us to analyze the functioning of an organization as a whole, and so “to see further and deeper”, which means not only concentrating on the direct effects of the decision made, but also analyzing, what effects it may cause in a long cause and effect chain (Piekarczyk & Zimniewicz, 2010, p. 28).

## **Understanding Comprehensive Relations with the Use of the Know-why Methodology**

Humans live in a world in which mutual relations have always been difficult to understand. For example tackling the processes of food webs and chains of living organisms, understanding the way the forces of nature function or relations found in the world economy have always been a challenge for the human mind (Vester, 2002, p. 9). One must acknowledge that all of the present time’s challenges, such as the changes in climate, economic crisis, education reforms stand out with dynamic congeniality. This is why, apart from simple cause and effect thinking, a view on dynamic structures is needed in order to understand the entity and functioning of comprehensive systems (Piekarczyk, 2014, p. 27).

F. Vester states that one should not avoid comprehensiveness, not make decisions based on intuition, or according to a scheme taken from the past. The meaning of a willful analysis and reflection over comprehensiveness is underlined in order to be capable of willfully using them (Vester, 1990, p. 506). But this requires changes of the foregoing planning methods and decision making. As mistakes and failures from previous years show, classic methods of decision making regarding enterprise management as well as regional development, economic aid for third-world countries or implementation of environmental friendly politics failed due to the fact that they did not take comprehensive actions and feedbacks into accounts (Vester, 2002, p. 11). P. Senge realizes that a typical human reaction in the systemic reality is searching for the reason (usually one, in some cases multiple reasons) and analyzing a simple cause chain, implementing a classic reductionist and isolationist approach. One does then not think to analyze multilateral and cross-curricular reactions, especially feedback loops. That is because it is difficult to undertake such operations in the mind. Decision-makers usually do not have the knowledge about the ways of conducting systemic analysis, as also often do not have access to a computer with appropriate software (Senge, 2002, p. 13). In effect, through the use of intuition, we discover simple cause and effect chains and uncomplicated “laws” ruling complex occurrences and introduce intuitive solutions into economic, political and social practices of an enterprise, organization or country – with usually dreadful effects, totally different from the ones established at the beginning (Senge, 2002, p. 13). As J. Honegger and H. Vettiger realize, the change in the way of thinking is extremely important for today’s managers, who are constantly confronted with complex situations (Honegger & Vettiger, 2003, p. 13). P. Senge, who researched the ways of introducing critical changes to an organization, is also of the same opinion (Senge, 2004, p. 20).

Network thinking then confronts increasing complexity by taking many factors into account and turning the attention to mutual relations and reactions (Probst & Gomez, 1990, p. 903). The methodology of network thinking as well as its improved version – the know-why methodology – have a systemic genesis. Its authors use concepts and determinations of the systems theory, the basic paradigm is a wide and full perception and study of the world (Piekarczyk & Zimmiewicz, 2010, p. 28). The central point of the mentioned methodology is presenting mutual reactions between factors in the form of a link web. Such a visualization allows observation and analysis of the relations as also a simulation of their future state. In a network spin, one also identifies feedback loops as also nonlinear situation development.

## **Integration and Development – Determinants of an Effective System Model**

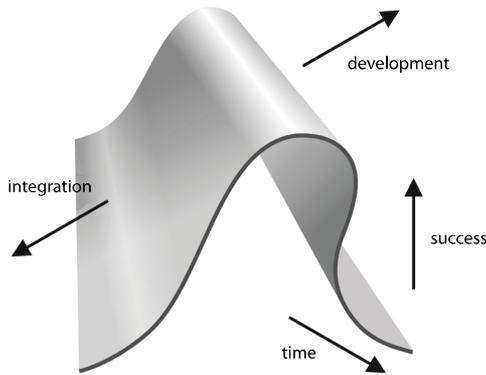
Network thinking, just like know-why thinking, allows us to identify and diagnose crucial success factors. Apart from that, know-why thinking explains in a metasystemic manner what distinguishes and characterizes an efficiently working system. K. Neumann, the author of the methodology, in order to create an effective system model, used an evolutionary development and success achieving model coming from the human nature and human needs (Neumann, 2007, p. 46). People usually take action as a result of their instincts work. These instincts serve evolutionary integration and development. People then are still hunters and pickers, whose instincts genetically serve optimal reproduction and the survival of their progeny.

That is why the model of an effective system is the confidence that as a result of evolution success is achieved by the system, which adjusts to its environment in a longer period – it integrates, but also a system, which for a shorter or longer period of time changes along with the environment or when compared to its competition – it develops (Neumann, 2008, p. 15). An efficiently functioning system after a longer period of time, finds itself in a balance between integration and development. An so a person, organization, product, religion, relationship, team etc. achieve success only when they integrate and develop in a longer perspective.

And so people achieved success during the process of evolution, because on the one hand they cooperated, created community relations while developing on the other. Hormones and neurotransmitters are responsible for this behavior. Each time they cause good fettle, when one belongs to someone or something. One also feels assurance and safety, discovers, or achieves something new. In this way, one can characterize the behavior of people usually when they are undertaking an action not in a routine manner or connected with duties, but in relation to inner needs (usually unknowingly). It is this that gives the feeling of integration and development. What is interesting is that the factors thanks to which people integrate and develop may be very diverse. One may feel integrated at a football stadium or while sitting in front of a computer, while another will feel integrated while driving a car or gardening. One may develop through reading books, while the other will find development in testing new possibilities or simply buying something new (Piekarczyk, 2014, p. 29).

This way of thinking may also be presented graphically. In order to do so, a so-called space of events, used by R. Thom in his catastrophe theory has been used (Thom, 1989, p. 35). Picture 1 presents the know-why way of thinking.

**Picture 1.** Know-why type thinking

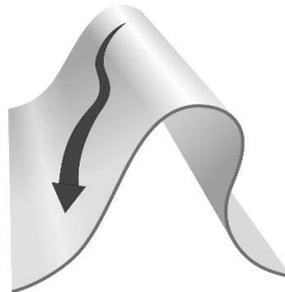


Source: Neumann (2012, p. 15).

The wave on Picture 1 illustrates the space of events. The higher someone or something is on its surface, the greater success it achieves. The object or person may, for example, be moving left, heading towards integration or moving right, heading towards further development. The wave is a representation of the environment, which constantly develops and changes. The movement of the wave may illustrate the development of the market, technology or society (Piekarczyk, 2014, p. 126).

If someone or something only integrates while excluding development, one will “slip down” the wave, which “moves” (“flows”) on. A fall means lack of success. Picture 2 presents a situation in which “slipping down” from the wave as a result of lack of development causes movement towards the area of failure (Piekarczyk, 2014, p. 126).

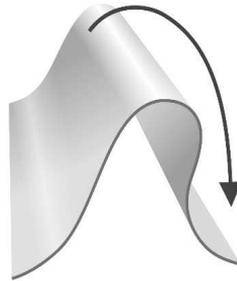
**Picture 2.** Know-why type thinking. Lack of development causes “slipping down” the wave towards failure



Source: Neumann (2012, p. 15).

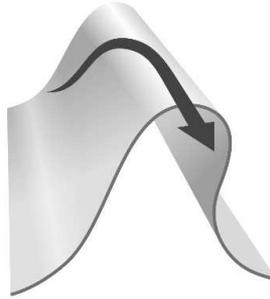
But if, instead, someone or something develops, forgetting about simultaneous integration which is presented on Picture 3 as “climbing” towards the wave crest, a situation may occur that a “fall” from the wave will take place towards the right side also heading for failure, because there is no adjustment to the environment and no integration has happened (Piekarczyk, 2014, p. 126).

**Picture 3.** Know-why type thinking. Development without integration may cause a “fall” from the wave towards failure



Source : Neumann, (2012, p. 16).

Through applying know-why type thinking, one searches for reasons of the problematic situation. Therefore, one asks one simple question : “why” – for example why do people talk with each other, why do they go to the stadium, why did the given product achieve success or why did the political reforms end with a failure. The know-why thinking method depicted on the above pictures with the use of the wave, helps us understand that effective measures leading to the improvement of a problematic situation should head towards restoring a balance between integration and development. When looking at know-why thinking presented on Picture 4, one may analyze in what “location” of the wave the current situation is “placed”. One can also decide if the current “placement” of the situation allows for effective integration and development or rather as a result of a long period imbalance between the two factors success is endangered. The biggest success is achieved on the top of the wave, where the balance between integration and development is found. As an example, the renovation of many old tenement houses in Poznan may be used. One keeps their prewar facades, Prussian wall, while the interiors are designed and handled accordingly to the newest building industry trends. This was met with very positive reactions of the society. In this, the balance between integration and development is kept.

**Picture 4.** Know-why type thinking. Balance between integration and development

Source : Neumann, (2008, p. 19).

To summarize, one can state that all people need integration and development, which makes them happy. But in each different person the feeling of the two factors may be caused by different reasons. This is a personal matter related to, for example, different experiences, established criteria or conditions. K. Neumann realizes that early man developed through crafting new tools, discovering new hunting strategies, gaining new territories while the modern-day man seeks development in career success, sport, computer games or even in the choice of new foods (Piekarczyk, 2014, p.127).

### **Integration and Development in a Modern-day Organization**

The vision of a modern-day organization can be presented with the use of a model (web), in which it is described what the most vital connections between its elements are, as well as what effect the elements have on one another. The development of an organization may be then seen through the prism of hard factors, competency profiles and communication channels. On the other hand, soft factors are also important and can consist of, for example, planning culture, deciding and communicating. If we look at an organization through the above presented effective system model, one can state that standardization secures the company from falling of the wave to the right through its crest. On the other hand, organizational culture gives a certain space of freedom, causing the company to develop and move up to the top of the wave. We then come to the situation mentioned by K. Neumann that development should be dual, as if it is not, we may face a catastrophe (Neumann, 2012, p. 144).

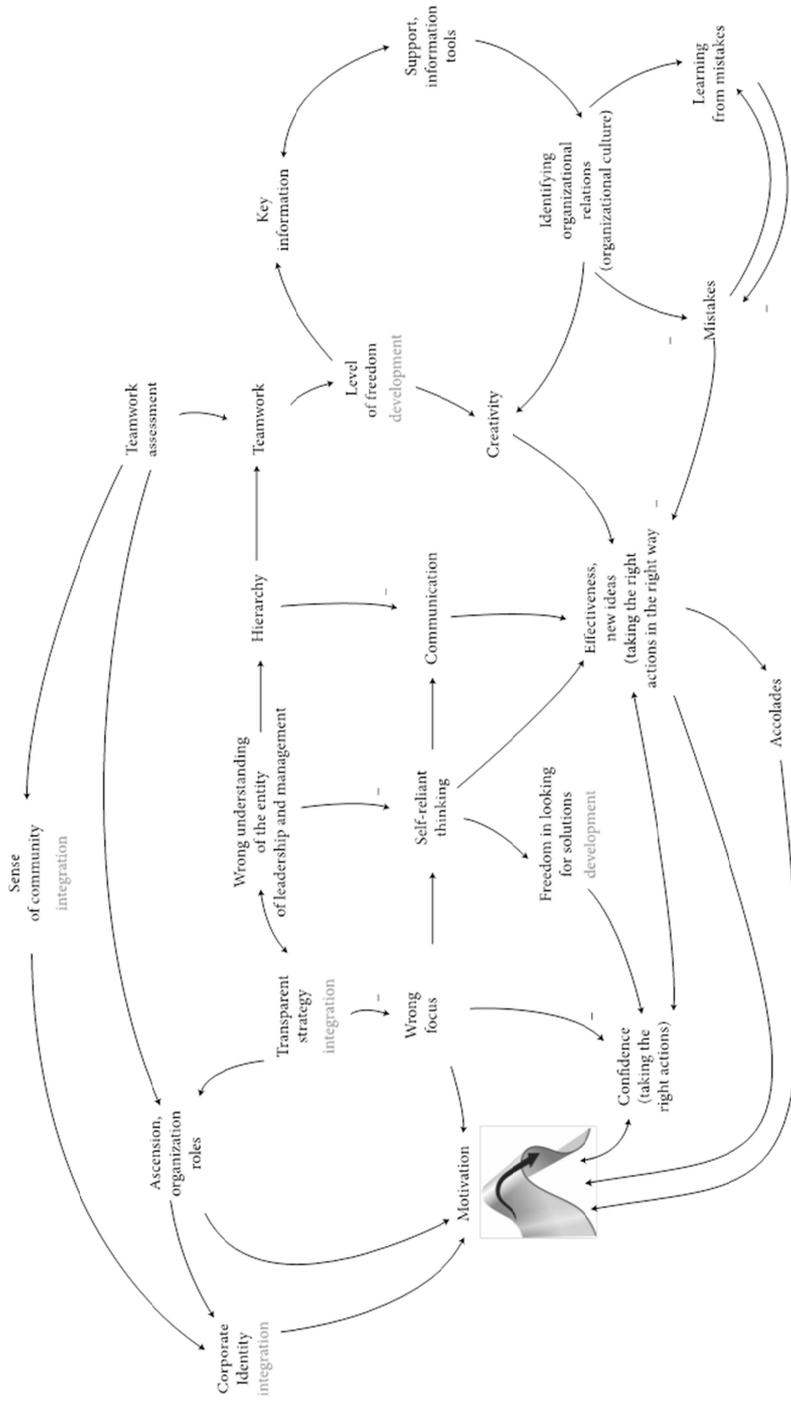
Integration in an organization through values, high ideals and overarching goals may provide an alternative to standardization. However, if the integration functions well without this standardization, it is dependent on the quality of management. Standardization is defined as a search to achieve the optimal, in certain situations. It is also defined as the degree of organization in a determined range through the establishment of resolutions dedicated for general and multiple usage to be used with current problems and those which may occur in the future (Law Journal, 2002). Standardization then reduces diversity and prevents its unnecessary development in the future. It unifies models and mechanisms functioning in the organization, and gives possibilities of replicating and monitoring generative processes. From the systemic angle, standardization can function only when the diversity of the boundary conditions is low. When the rate of liberty is raised, diversity also rises, which may support mechanisms of self-organization. They will function well, when consistent and integrated with the aims of the organization and not taken out of context of the environment (Neumann, 2012, p. 144-145). Problems though may appear in a situation when the activity of certain areas of the organization may be too far away from its overarching goals. As an example, one can point out situations such as improper evaluation of the research and development section regarding market development or unethical behavior of the employees.

Factors which have great impact on the functioning of an organization may be presented with the use of a link web (Gomez & Probst, 1995, p. 36). The web is a visualization of a problematic situation, which reflects the reactions between the elements (Ulrich & Probst, 1990, p. 31). This allows us to observe the situation of the enterprise in “long cause and effect chains” and analyze which negative and positive effects surface along with time. This way “discovering” new factors takes place within a web of mutual relations (Piekarczyk & Zimmiewicz, 2010, p. 28).

In a link web, one may observe that the success of an organization as a whole depends on whether the appropriate actions in the right manner are executed, therefore if the actions are effective and beneficial, with the rate of mistakes standing at a low level.

And so the ability of self-reliant thinking, efficient communication channels, creativity, motivation, teamwork are the vital factors which may be shaped through the appropriate quality of management, the appropriate attitude of the employees as also the use of IT tools. Picture 5 shows the basic relations between key factors supporting the success of an organization

**Picture 5.** Organization in a dependence network



Source: own work based on Neumann (2012, p. 147).

In the web presented on Picture 5, an attempt has been made to reflect the basic relations, feedback loops and delays in a system. Of course, each person may assess the situation from a different angle and one may want to prove that for certain cases the graph should have a different form. The constructed web may be changed and supplemented, it may then be a starting point for further discussion. One of the key factors presented on Picture 5 is the wrong understanding of the entity of leadership and management. The graph showed that in order to directly or indirectly influence the effectiveness of an organization, its creativity and good actions taken, good communication and efficient teamwork is needed. Good relations between workers are influenced by many factors, some of which are organizational structure, the possibility of self-reliant thinking as also the correct understanding of the entity of leadership and management. The managership is responsible for results, but is not the exclusive competence holder in the organization. Good headship should support the competence of others, and appropriately connect them together. Therefore, the managership should not assess the situation in which the organization is without the contribution of others. It is very integrative to create the organizations strategy together, present its situation to the workers, or explain the entity of basic relations and feedback loops to give the employees a possibility to assess if the situation will develop positively or is it caught in a vicious circle. Lack of integration causes anxieties and concerns. This is related to the fact that if people do not understand something, or are not able to explain something, they become uncertain and loose the feeling of integration.

The visualisation of relations presented on Picture 5 enables us to observe the situation of the enterprise. It is clearly visible that the mutual influence of factors, such as: strategy transparency, Corporate Identity, teamwork, simple organizational hierarchy as also understanding and support from the board give rational successes. Prosperity is also influenced by organizational culture which allows for mistakes. At the same time, a reflection about relations and mutual reactions between the key factors of the success in the organization is also very important.

According to research carried out by Boston Consulting Group, the ability of realizing interdependence between factors as also their skillful analysis are a key competence of the future (BCG, 2002, p. 16). Many authors specializing in network approach state that all problems – starting with simple everyday ones and ending with large complex ones – may be lessened or avoided through a better understanding of relations between component elements of the system (Braun, 2001, p. 13). W. Sitte and H. Wohlschlägl also encourage to reflect about relations, because it gives a new insight and better understanding as also enables us to achieve deeper

conclusions (Sitte & Wohlschlägl, 2006, p. 508). In network thinking, including the know-why methodology, all possible interested groups of the interest are represented. This enables to view the problem from different angles. While presenting the key factors in mutual relations in the form of a web, it is important to have many workers involved in the discussion and work “on the web”, because the “biggest intellect” is not only found on the board. A joint intellect is created through the intellect of each individual. And so, while analysing the situation with the help of a web, in a team of workers of different grades and specialities, one creates an organizational culture based on transparency. But as K. Neumann realises, this kind of culture may be faced with resistance. One of the main obstacles may be the evolutionary need of the human mind to treat each person as competition. In relation to this, those who want to be promoted will reluctantly share ideas with the group, and will not leave the “laurel” to the team, because a joint creation of a problem situation with the use of a web reflects the way of thinking of the whole group. On the other hand, the worker who has already been promoted will also not want to reveal his weak points, which may appear during the modelling of the situation with the use of the web methodology. If the workers describe the problem much better than their supervisor, “discover” new factors or see “further and deeper”, then the manager may feel endangered. Furthermore, if decisions are made basing on transparent assessments with the understanding of important relations, the policy maker may be criticized for tardiness and inefficiency. Without a visualisation and reflection about the relations, the failure could be assigned to large complexity. Regardless of the resistance, the culture of decision-making, planning and communicating through visualizations and analysis of relations between key success factors may be a very efficient leverage of organizational development.

In the web presented on Picture 5 also a very important factor contributing to the success of an organization has been mentioned, namely the motivation of the workers. Many authors are of the opinion that good motivation of the workers is fundamental in effective management. Nowadays, the employer must not only care about the safe and hygienic working conditions, but also about the psychological comfort of the workers. M. Armstrong states that the basis of a company’s success is the effective leadership over people (Armstrong, 1996, p. 9). They are the most important guarantors of target completion, which is why the best solution is to achieve a balance between the targets that are important for the people and the company’s strategy. Of course, there are workers who define their status through the number of subordinates, or their own recruitment, and no matter what kind of enterprise, they will change their workplaces in order to

lead a larger group of workers or earn more money. A person caring only about their own career and prestige is not a good manager. Such behaviour can be the reason for low efficiency of many employees. It is true that the more people one leads, the smaller the impact one has on the efficiency of each individual worker. But in a group of several people, the influence on subordinates is much more visible. However, while looking at the problem from the other side, a conclusion comes to mind that even a good manager is not capable of fully influencing the attitude and actions of his workers. That is why while motivating, it is also worth taking into account the fact that work carries a whole variety of emotions with it (Neumann, 2015, pp. 24-27). So, there are negative emotions of overload, deadening, and uncertainty, as well as positive ones of safety, happiness, related with the possibility of influencing the development of the situation as well as with achievements. Therefore, a workplace can give its employees the feeling of integration and development. The situation is not good if these needs are not catered for.

At present, career opportunities and possibilities of professional growth are very important for a growing group of workers. The detected lack of possibilities for professional development is the most popular reason of switching workplaces by talented employees even when their salary is satisfactory. The reason for changing jobs can also be the fact that an organization guarantees professional development, but the salary offered only covers the minimum requirements. It is, therefore, worth observing the situation and analysing in what "location" of the wave the given worker may be found, and whether the employee is in balance between integration and development, or whether the worker feels overloaded, isolated and tense. During their work, employees may climb the top of the wave presented in Picture 4. The wave constantly grows and moves. This way, they meet their need of integration and development. Thanks to this, positive emotions accompany them, and they feel satisfaction and happiness from their work. And that is when the balance between integration and development is achieved.

The appropriate atmosphere in the organization is important to achieve the abovementioned balance. The organization should be constantly monitored. One also needs a full transparency of actions and decisions, because this way the workers may feel safer at work and will positively forecast its future. What is more, creating a coherent image of a company (Corporate Identity), consistent with the vision and strategy of action, allows creating a unique style and identity of the organization. This creates a positive image, aids reputation and enhances its prestige in the eyes of the workers and clients. The appropriate atmosphere at the workplace is then important, as

well as the space for informal communication and healthy work conditions, because this will allow the employees to feel as a part of a team, and will cater for their need of integration.

Alongside the feeling of integration, the possibilities of further development are also very important. Development, though, cannot be too intensive, because it leads to overload. In practice, it is not always easy to achieve a balanced progress of workers. For instance, in a situation in which a worker fulfils his tasks and takes care of obligations especially well, after a time in which no change in requirements, the worker may become bored and come to a conclusion that the full potential is not used. That is when the organization should solve the situation by modifying the workplace by, for example, implementing job enrichening techniques. If such possibilities cannot be seen, the company must absolutely take actions in order for the development of the worker to take place. It does not have to be related to the range and subject of the job. This may relate to the workers personal interests, forming his abilities or talents. It is important for the worker to have the feeling that the organization offers valuable possibilities of development, even outside the place of work.

### **Conclusions**

People want to develop and feel integrated. These are the basic motives of human action, which have lead humankind to the top of the food chain and resulted in exposing good and bad sides of civilization. Each feeling known to man can be assigned either to the need of integration or to the need of development. But the criteria thanks to which a person can experience these feelings are very individual. One will feel integrated thanks to social work, while another will achieve this by singing in an academic choir. One will develop thanks to attending self-development courses while another will find chess as the source of progress. In each case, a release of neurotransmitters and hormones takes place in the brain, which give good fettle every time. What will work in the end is difficult to define – one may only form the appropriate possibilities of feeling integration and development.

There are organizations which only offer development or integration. It is worth taking care of what the feelings of the workers are regarding this matter. Also, analysis of reports may give significant information to the organization. They could be presented in the form of a web and show what factors encourage or restrain integration, and also what helps or precludes development. In this way, a wider picture of the situation of the enterprise will be created, which will show the factors which influence integration and

development. It is important for the factors to be diverse, mutually supply one another as well as encourage activity, so that they become the instrumental factors of a humans actions. It is so because the existence of those who do not develop and integrate for a longer period is in danger. Japanese enterprises have understood this well and develop thanks to strong integration using the so-called collective intelligence (Nonaka, Takeuchi, 1995, pp.95-117). Ch. Bartell and S. Ghoshal also realize that in practice there are many enterprises which manage to keep the balance between integration and development (Bartell & Ghoshal, 1997, pp. 48-56). To keep this balance, it is important to form the atmosphere of mutual trust and support, because thanks to this the individual worker initiative grows, cooperation is improved and learning process are intensified (Bartell & Ghoshal, 1994, p. 91). However, there are still enterprises in which an imbalance between the two determinants may be found. Often the employees of such companies search for the feeling of integration and development in other areas of life.

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