

“At WR there had been a series of events that left leaders and staff stunned. This affected their ability to adapt and to maintain their balance. As they would begin to come to terms with one event, they would be hit with a new crisis.”

Quality & Empowerment

Organization Development at WomenRising, 1992–2016

By Michelle Heyne, Robert Gallagher, Joaneileen Coughlan, and Martha Lewin

This article reviews the history of a Jersey City-based nonprofit, WomenRising, that worked extensively with a professional organization development consultant for over 15 years. During that time, the organization institutionalized methods and processes central to its aim of empowering its employees and clients while offering the highest quality service. The work was initiated and integrated during the tenure of a long-term executive director who championed the objectives and remained deeply committed to the effort. The executive director left in 2005 and the contract for the outside consultant ended in 2006.

In the almost 10 years following, the organization experienced several traumas and an increasingly difficult operating environment, especially financially and politically. The organization development work has continued through the efforts of an internal manager with no formal OD training and an executive director who values what has gone before.

We explore the ways in which WomenRising developed cultural density around processes and structures supportive of quality and empowerment. We also consider how the effort has changed in the absence of outside professional assistance and the realities of the organization’s reduced staff levels and persistent financial challenges. We are particularly focused on how the organization has used institutionalized OD practice and approach to nurture resilience and commitment, and to continue its efforts to improve the lives of its clients and its employees.

The Work

*We keep doing our work . . .
Seek to reconstitute the world*

Five of us were debriefing the survey-feedback process just completed with the management team of WomenRising (WR). Roseann Mazzeo, SC, the executive director, offered her version of Adrienne Rich’s poem, “Natural Resources” (Rich, 1978): “My heart is overwhelmed by all I cannot save, so much has been destroyed. And yet day after day, and with no extraordinary power, I join with all those who seek to reconstitute the world.”

Joaneileen Coughlan, the director of Domestic Violence Services said, “We keep doing our work.” In Meyers-Briggs Type theory that’s an INTJ and an ESFP agreeing. This sense of common cause and commitment, coupled with significant diversity in expression and approach, is emblematic of WR.

WomenRising is a community-based organization for women in Jersey City. It is “governed and managed by women and works to assist women and their families to achieve self-sufficiency and live safe, fulfilling, and productive lives, through social services, economic development, and advocacy services” (WomenRising, 2016).

The organization development work originally initiated at WR was specifically about helping nurture a humane, empowering, and productive culture. The work was developed and expanded and has continued over more than 24 years. Richard Beckhard’s famous definition of OD (Beckhard, 1969) captures the scope

and may point to areas that could benefit from renewed engagement: “an effort (1) planned, (2) organization-wide, and (3) managed from the top, to (4) increase organization effectiveness and health through (5) planned interventions in the organization’s processes, using behavioral science knowledge” (p. 9).

OD at WR and the Authors

WR has been using OD methods and understandings since 1992. From 1992–2006, Robert Gallagher, an external OD consultant, facilitated the work. Martha Lewin was Executive Director from prior to the work’s beginning until 2005. From 2006 until the present, the OD effort has been led by Joaneileen Coughlan, now WR’s Director of Domestic Violence Services. Michelle Heyne, along with Gallagher, led a survey- feedback intervention with the WR management team in December of 2015.

The process included:

1. A survey of the management team members, including overall system assessment, team effectiveness (as management team and in departments), relationship between employee retention and organizational culture, and statements of Likes/Concerns/Wishes.
2. Michelle Heyne interviewed Martha Lewin, Joaneileen Coughlan, and Roseann Mazzeo, as well as the former Director of Administration, who had left WR recently.
3. A feedback day with the management team. Additional assessments were made and discussed; the group created a history line of the OD effort (1992 – present); and the results of the survey were discussed.

The current management team used the process as a way to reflect on where the system is now and to begin an improvement conversation. The writing team started with a few questions in mind: What has been sustained in the OD work? What has continued effectively in the 10 years since WR had regular professional OD assistance? In considering what had been sustained, we

looked at two levels: the ways of working in teams and as a total system, and in the underlying organizational values and their deeper operating assumptions.

There have been three phases to the OD effort

1. Embody (1992–2006) – Putting flesh on the values
2. Trauma (2005–2008) – The effort is both strengthened and fossilized
3. Persisting (2006–2016) – “It takes patience and persistence to overcome injury”

Embodiment (1992 – 2006)

Putting Flesh on the Values

Martha Lewin and Robert Gallagher had worked together when Lewin was serving as President of the Affordable Housing Network of New Jersey. Gallagher was the group’s OD consultant. The two had a conversation about her efforts as executive director of WomenRising (then the YWCA of Hudson County) to increase employee involvement in decision making and work processes. Lewin asked if Gallagher would be willing to meet with her and others to explore what they had been doing.

In October 1992, Gallagher spent several hours talking with the Senior Management Team about YWCA’s work, structures, and core processes; what was going well and what was not going well. The staff of about 80 was mostly Latina and Black women in their 20s and early 30s. Much of the conversation centered on the commitment to empower the staff as people and employees. The managers were frustrated by their inability to make much progress.

They shared a strong investment in the empowerment of women. Lewin was the most vocal about needing to include the staff as well as the clients. She understood there was an organic relationship between the staff’s own empowerment and their commitment and ability to empower clients.

They also hoped their recent merger would be nurtured. The merger of the Jersey City YWCA with the Bayonne YWCA was a merger of strength. Both were doing well. Bayonne had a large child care center, which added a new dimension to the work

already underway in Jersey City. Lewin was sensitive to the need to help the “merged” staffs and boards of the two organizations establish a common culture.

The values were clear; the practices were weak. The initial emphasis of the OD work was therefore to put flesh on the values. Using Edgar Schein’s approach to shaping organizational culture (Schein, 1999), the task was to create artifacts, ways of working that expressed the espoused values and deeper underlying assumptions of the system.

The first step was a training program for the larger management team. Over the first few months the program focused on two areas:

1. Team skills (group facilitation, communication and feedback, learning from experience, group norms and standards, group processes such as brainstorming and prioritizing, testing processes, the use of survey-feedback in teams, trust development); and
2. Quality and empowerment concepts and methods (e.g., elements of quality, a systems view of organizations, exploring self-managing teams and positional leadership, and developing a client focus). There was also significant concern about creating a culture that employees would value both personally and professionally in spite of the non-profit realities of low pay and limited benefits.

A team of managers was formed to keep the work on track. That group named the effort Quality and Empowerment (Q&E). The team worked through 1993 to monitor and take initiative to increase quality and empowerment throughout the organization.

In that first year of Q&E, WR expanded the training to more staff people, conducted a pilot project with the Group Home department, and increased the frequency of meetings for the larger management team. The OD work also extended beyond the Q&E effort to working with the Board on improved meetings and the organization’s end goals.

Although integrated, the initial focus of the Q&E effort was more on

empowerment. Training supported team skills such as communication, meeting facilitation, and decision making. The broad objective was to increase participation and ownership, as well as competence in participation. These were seen as the building blocks of empowerment. The work was designed with the understanding that “empowerment” is little more than a slogan unless the group has the skills to wield power effectively, efficiently, and in the service of both the organization’s mission and personal objectives.

There quickly emerged a focus on Quality that led to the creation of annual goal setting at both the organization and department level. The requirement was to (a) establish goals based on and in furtherance of the mission and vision; and (b) the goals had to be measurable. At the end of the reporting cycle, teams reported to one another on their progress using the measurement criteria.

Over the next 13 years the work moved along two broad, interdependent tracks:

Q&E Effort

- » Team skills and empowerment training of new staff became institutionalized with required full-day training and orientation within a short time of joining WR.
- » Use of the methods and processes were required across all departments, with such artifacts as newsprint and easels in all meeting rooms and meeting norms clearly posted.
- » The organization implemented a process involving the entire staff in re-envisioning the organization and its work.
- » Four All Staff Days per year permitted WR to engage regular system assessment and related improvements, to provide continuing training, and to further build community. Annual retreats for the Management Team began.
- » The targeted goal setting was integrated into the All Staff Days, with time provided to accomplish both the goal setting and subsequent reporting and assessment. The organization set and measured goals and objectives to increase productivity, quality service,

and the empowerment of staff and clients.

- » An advanced training group of managers and other staff was created to ground the system in a higher level of competence and commitment.
- » Coaching was used to help managers integrate Q&E practices in each department’s functioning.

Other OD Interventions

- » Board development, including a strategic process involving the board and staff.
- » PIP (Performance Improvement Process), a self-assessment, peer and supervisor feedback process.

One outcome of the work was the establishment of a “common language.” Martha Lewin uses that term to refer to the set of skills, knowledge, and stance that became normative by 1995. The following two interventions probably had the most overall impact in shaping a culture that was humane, empowering, and productive:

1. Improving competence for facilitating and participating in teams. There was introductory and advanced training. Meeting norms were established that all departments and teams were expected to use. A critical mass of highly competent and committed staff emerged and was nurtured.
2. In 2005–06 the Management Team set two targets for the organization. The first was a team development process¹ to integrate in the departments an action research approach to measuring productivity and job satisfaction. The second was an “engaged management process” equipping managers for a practice of regular and frequent one-on-one assessment and coaching with each staff person.

Assessment of the Organization in 1999

When the managers assessed the impact of the OD effort in the fall of 1999, they reported results such as:

¹ *The approach to team improvement was partly based on the research reported in Munro & Laiken (2004).*

1. More comfort in communications with one another, the whole staff, and the executive director. Improved information flow, especially around “rubs” in the system. More sense of partnership among managers, board, and staff.
2. Less “emotional reactivity” – reported a tendency to move more quickly to “let’s just solve the problem”
3. Increased professional maturity as a management team, also increased maturity in whole staff.
4. Had become a very accepting group – reported overall sense of respect, sense of not being judged; stated “it is OK to not know, don’t have to be the expert.”
5. More skilled at: designing meetings, facilitating meetings, seeing “rubs” and acting more quickly, and better at identifying what is happening. Reported that these skills had led to more productive meetings.
6. New staff were now joining a “critical mass” – there was a train already in motion that people were jumping onto; there was a clear, strong organizational culture; the culture was integrated into hiring processes, including noticing candidates’ responses to the presentation on culture. Reported that WR had a people development strategy “that works.”
7. People leaving expressed being torn—they were now more likely to leave over money, benefits, etc., not over the culture. This was consistent with WR’s express aim to serve as a training ground and to accept that turnover would persist along with the organization’s financial realities.

Trauma (2005–2008)

The Effort is both Strengthened and Fossilized

Between late 2005 and the fall of 2008 WR experienced three organizational traumas: Martha Lewin, the executive director of 31 years, retired; the new executive director arrived, did not develop a workable relationship with the managers, and left; and Rose Davis, the long term director of administration and a strong supporter of the OD effort, died in her office. A fourth

element emerged a couple of years later when WR experienced the loss of a major program and funding source.

As part of the recent facilitated session held in late 2015, Gallagher and Heyne had the current managers, as well as Lewin, create a history line of the OD work. It became clear it was important to revisit the period of trauma. That period was eight years in the past but still present in the room. It was the only time during the feedback and conversation process that there were tears.

The Q&E processes and methods became in some ways “holy relics,” not to be modified or adapted. Even fossilized, however, they proved useful in maintaining the health of the system and symbolized the unity among managers. They are, in fact, methods effective in encouraging team participation, supporting healthy communication, and deepening commitment.

After 31 Years

Martha Lewin retired as WR’s Executive Director at the end of 2005 after 31 years of service. Lewin had turned the organization around several times during that period, demonstrating an ability to move the organization from decline to survival and new life, while building on and reinvigorating the mission. During Lewin’s tenure, the organization faced a number of significant funding and programming challenges, especially as state and Federal political realities shifted. Lewin led the organization through successful management of both the emergence of new opportunities and the retraction or elimination of prior funding sources.

There would have been potential trauma with the loss of any ED serving for 31 years. In this case, the loss of Lewin’s skills for strategic turn-arounds responsive to the environment was a major hit for an organization operating within a difficult political and social context.

That said, we do not think her retirement was, in itself, a trauma. It was a transition. There was an orderly and inclusive transition process. There was no undo anxiety as the search took place. Lewin’s retirement was not an organizational trauma until what came next.

An Attack on WR’s Values and Deep Assumptions

The new executive director arrived in October 2005. While many of the routine OD activities of the organization continued, a good bit of the outside consultant’s time and energy began to go toward managing a growing tension between the executive director and the Management Team. The consultant ended his work in March 2006.

It quickly became clear that the new executive director represented a very poor fit with WR’s culture. The search commit-

tee had focused on her intelligence and extensive management and fundraising experience. In retrospect, Lewin and the managers in place at that time have speculated that the search committee members may not have had an adequate understanding of the underlying cultural values and the importance of the Q&E work in carrying out the work of the organization. Further, fit with those values was not used as an explicit set of criteria in evaluating executive director candidates.

In August of 2006, after repeated attempts to resolve the issues, the Management Team went to the Board asking that the executive director be removed. She left that fall, having lasted one year. Related difficulties consumed the system for another year. There was a long, drawn out and very ugly legal confrontation between the executive director and the Board. Rose Davis, the Director of Administration, and Roseann Mazzeo, the new replacement ED, were of necessity intensely engaged with the work related to the troubles. The Board itself was filled with friction and antagonisms. One Board member reported that she felt like she was on a battle field much of the time, with people calling each other names and shouting across the table at one another.

The managers saw the culture they had built and experienced as humane and productive being under attack. They fought back, using what some have described as a rather rigid use of the institutional processes and methods. The result was a stronger commitment to the culture and what we have characterized as a fossilizing of the ways of working.

The stronger commitment shared by the managers reinforced a sense of being a team, of being able to count on one another. The fossilizing seems to have come from the fear that if they gave way on anything, the new executive director would destroy it all. The Q&E processes and methods became in some ways “holy relics,” not to be modified or adapted. Even fossilized, however, they proved useful in maintaining the health of the system and symbolized the unity among managers. They are, in fact, methods effective in encouraging team participation, supporting healthy communication, and deepening commitment. This is true even if it became less clear over time that the methods are means to support, strengthen, and build the culture, not themselves the intended outcome.

Rose’s Death

Rose Davis died on September 16, 2008. If WR were a church the date would be in the calendar of saints. She died in her office at WR. Davis had served WR for about 30 years, and had been the Director of Administration for several years before her death. She paid attention to the details and core processes of the system. She was trusted by other managers and staff. After Lewin’s retirement and the ordeal of the new executive director, Davis was the system’s rock.

The retirement of a long-term and effective executive director, a struggle with a new executive director, and the death of a beloved manager all happened one on top of the other. There was no breathing room; no chance to get perspective and restore a sense of stability. The available energy was necessarily directed toward getting the organization’s daily work done and on managing the crises.

Coping with the Trauma

What could we have done differently? That was a key question for Gallagher, Coughlin, and Lewin, who were present during some or all of these events.

The short answer from each was – be more assertive!

Coughlin said, “I would have been more insistent about [the Q&E work] continuing to be Management Team driven. Keep every manager involved in the training, facilitating, and following through. I still could have been the ‘leader’ in the Q&E effort but not the only person responsible.” She added, “We never really processed any of [the trauma]. Honestly – this is the most I have thought about any of it! The managers were getting the work done and having a sense of relief that the new executive director was gone. Was it just a time for us managers to be left alone? In hindsight I don’t think I could have processed all that happened at that point.”

Lewin offered some perspective, “And the long time OD consultant wasn’t there anymore – so a trusted, familiar guide to help with familiar processes was missing. My guess is that if [Gallagher] were still showing up once in a while, he would have seen what was happening and been able to help create appropriate responses. One of the great things about the whole Q&E adventure is that it did provide a familiar, tried, and true structure to believe in and to use to get through trauma for the ones living the trauma.” She also said, “I think I might have been more proactive (more forceful) with the search committee in getting them to understand what the OD work was; how integral it was to the organization’s life cycle; how much many of the staff valued it. Perhaps that would have helped the committee to select a new ED more in alignment with these processes and values.” She added, “In my last year, work with the MT could have been looking at the processes in use, particularly with an eye toward streamlining and clarifying if/where possible. This might have made it easier to describe to a new executive director, and might also have made it easier to keep the ball rolling in the departments.”

Gallagher said, “I had moved to Seattle. Martha had retired. I felt somewhat

like a translator trying to help [the new executive director] understand what the managers were saying to her and then helping her speak in a language the managers could hear. It was exhausting. I was ready to be done. During my last time with the Management Team I had them complete a worksheet about what had been true about OD at WR. They most clearly saw how it had improved WR’s processes for problem solving, adapting to new opportunities, and self-renewal, as well as the value of the external consultant and support from the top of the organization. The worksheet also looked at the future of OD at WR (they knew that the year-round use of a consultant wasn’t in the cards). They wanted a mix of sending a few managers for 4–5 weeks of OD training and using an external consultant annually in a 3–4 day visit. I wish I had had them engage the results at that time rather than letting it wait for a future meeting.”

Shana Hormann and Pat Vivian’s work on organizational trauma (Hormann & Vivian, 2005) notes that organizational trauma is about “severe distress” that is the result of an injury from a single event or an accumulation of events. At WR there had been a series of events that left leaders and staff stunned. This affected their ability to adapt and to maintain their balance. As they would begin to come to terms with one event, they would be hit with a new crisis. It was difficult to maintain hope and difficult to remain open to both seeing and pursuing new approaches.

Persisting (2006–2016)

“It takes patience and persistence to overcome injury . . .” (Anderman, 2013)

That’s a quote from Yo-Yo Ma in which he is talking about managing tendinitis. It could just as well be said of how WR managed its traumas.

In 2006, the management team engaged in a battle with the new executive director over organizational culture.

The broad organizational targets (team development and engaged manager process) for 2006 were sidelined by the conflict. These and other new initiatives

to improve WR’s life and work were put off while the system focused on conflict management and maintaining the existing core of its way of working and being. The organization’s ability to envision and implement new initiatives, to enhance and strengthen the working culture, did not recover.

What they could do was maintain the best of what they already had in place. The managers and the current Executive Director, Roseann Mazzeo, persisted. They kept doing the work of serving their clients, and they continued setting department goals and pursuing performance improvement processes, the Q&E training for new employees, and to some extent, the use of team skills and methods in the management team and some departments. A “Q&E Toolkit” booklet was produced containing many of the team processes and skills.

Consultants were occasionally used for short term work, especially for administering the MBTI®. The content of these engagements was described by staff members as “cute,” and therefore not adequately aligned with the gravity of WR’s day-to-day reality.

The continuation of the effort relied on the perseverance of Coughlin and Davis. With Davis’ death, Coughlin became the primary person managing the Q&E effort. Others helped around specific events and the executive director was supportive. The training team weakened and was not renewed. The once robust critical mass of highly competent and committed employees grew frail.

The system was exhausted and drained. In some ways it still is. Among the managers there is at times a funny rhythm between agitation and emotional withdrawal. Some, especially those who did not experience either the heyday of the OD efforts or the trauma first hand, are now skeptical of the Q&E methods and processes, though it’s not clear they are themselves particularly skilled in the methods or that they have a concrete alternative.

What stands out when spending time at WR is persistence. Persistence is a traditional virtue because it is about perseverance in spite of fatigue or frustration.

When we decided to use the Yo-Yo Ma quote, we hesitated over the word “patience.” It doesn’t fit for us if taken in its more passive sense of compliance and serenity. But if understood in its traditional association with the virtues of forbearing and steadfastness, it seemed just right. It is a kind of assertive patience in which we endure under difficult circumstances and strain.

What Continues

What has been sustained in the OD work? What has effectively been continued in the ten years since WR had regular professional OD assistance?

During the recent survey-feedback process here is what we heard the managers say continued with some strength:

1. We make a difference – for women and their families, in economic development, social services, domestic violence, job programs, and housing.
2. We provide quality service.
3. We have an organizational culture and climate of: participation and empowerment; informal; people work hard, work in teams, the organization has values, the work is never boring; work is demanding, a real challenge; WR takes the personal needs and goals of staff into consideration; being an accepting group – respect, sense of not being judged, it’s OK to not know, don’t have to be an expert.
4. We are clear about our core values and staff members find purpose in a larger mission. We own our direction.
5. The managers are competent and committed.
6. We value and are good at team work – show qualities like respect, helpfulness, and cooperation. Have skills for designing and facilitating meetings, seeing “rubs” and acting more quickly, better at identifying what is happening.
7. Staff members can develop professionally and as people, can learn new skills in their field, as well as in teamwork and group decision making; able to stretch self, receive feedback on one’s skills and the impact one has in the workplace, increase perseverance and

courage; become more aware of own strengths and weaknesses; take more responsibility for the work; self-manage work while staying connected to others and the organization; can broaden their experience – in their field of work, of different cultures and groups, in working with a diversity of personalities.

Heroic Victories and Noble Slogs

The Marine Corps often uses three battles (Alexander, 1997) to illustrate some aspect of its life and culture. Belleua Wood and Iwo Jima were expressions of valor and persistence leading to large scale success. These were victories achieved at great cost, but victories nonetheless. On the other hand, Chosin Reservoir in Korea was about survival. It was a hard slog completed with honor and integrity.

In reflecting together following the survey-feedback session with the current management team of WR, the authors concluded that the work of WR is less about clear and large-scale victories with an obvious end-point, and more about a kind of grueling slog that we know doesn’t end but where each person engaged in it must hope it will be transformed. It is work in which the victories are real and important, though smaller in scale and about individuals and their families. Those victories are also interspersed with the inevitable failures, the inevitable tragedies. All of it – the good and the bad – occurs within a broader social system that is broken in many ways and over which the staff at WR have little control or influence.

In this context, doing the work, seeking to “reconstitute the world” is something heroic and noble. It may also be hard to get enough distance from the day-to-day to recognize that. Marines in combat mostly don’t manage by *not* being afraid. Their training is: you *will* be afraid *and* you will be able to do the work even while afraid. The Marines work at shaping a narrative about their identity and their integrity that gives meaning and a clear sense of purpose even in the face of apparent failure.

People at WR do the work despite fear, grief, and anger. They do the work even

while under-resourced and under pressure. That is heroic and noble, and it leaves individuals and the group with wounds that do not fully heal.

It is impossible to sort out the extent to which the OD work relates to this ability they have for hard work and a long slog. There are other factors that are clearly in play, such as the assertive patience of Martha Lewin and Roseann Mazzeo, and the type of person attracted to work at WR. It is a fair guess that the OD effort supported employees’ capacity by making it easier to work productively in teams, by helping them to focus their energy and time, by providing for 15 years a trusted person to reflect and strategize with, and by continuing to support methods and processes that have fostered a culture worth fighting for.

Next

There are three interdependent areas in which we see the OD work developing.

Refresh

The OD effort needs to be revitalized. Having a top notch outside consultant a few times each year, coupled with additional training for staff or managers with a passion for this work, would help WR continue to move forward.

Identify two or three key staff who might not have plans to leave in the near future, and send them for appropriate OD training. Then, when they do leave, send others.

The executive director needs to increase the priority of the OD work. Her support and direct involvement is essential in any rejuvenation effort.

Involve managers and staff members in the refresh. Identify those with competence in the existing approach and test their willingness to receive formal OD training. Once trained have them work with the consultant in envisioning and implementing a new approach that builds upon what has been done while addressing current needs.

Critical Mass

Begin an intentional endeavor to rebuild a core of competent and committed staff members for OD work. Expect all

managers to fully engage the process, including using core methods across the organization. Identify other staff members for advanced training in team facilitation and participation.

Reward Persistence

WR offers some acknowledgment for longevity and productivity. Our impression is that the process is slightly lightweight given the staff work being done. We would strengthen that process and add an element. Those who show exceptional persistence over a long period of time need acknowledgment. This is persistence as demonstrated in competent and committed work in five areas, either over many years or under especially difficult circumstances: in serving clients; working with and supporting others in their team; the particular task they are assigned to perform; self-care and development; and understanding and supporting the mission, values and leaders of WR.

Conclusion

In stating what we learned, we simultaneously offer a set of hypotheses that can be used and tested in future work. We identified four primary “learnings.”

1. OD work needs a strong internal advocate. It is best if that person is the top institutional leader. For 15 years the Executive Director played that role. When she retired, the task was picked up by Joaneileen Coughlan who, though not in the top leadership role, was able to maintain a good bit of what had been achieved.
2. If leaders shape a strong and dense culture it is more likely to be sustainable over time and under pressure. Between 1992 and 1996 WR developed a highly integrated culture of empowerment, service, and persistence owned by managers and most staff members. That culture is still in place even if somewhat fossilized. Efforts at revitalizing and strengthening the culture would likely be easier to engage and implement than if the artifacts connected to Q&E had been abandoned.
3. An organizational culture grounded in the owned identity and integrity of

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the institution is better able to cope with trauma and respond productively to threats. That ownership by the WR management team allowed them to collaborate successfully in protecting what they valued.

4. Managing organizational trauma is easier when the system has a common way of framing what has happened. This framing needs to be built upon the actual events. The Marine Corps framed the battle of Chosin Reservoir as an example of morale and adaptability. For them it fit their values of honor, courage, and commitment. At WR there were and are individuals who understand what happened as a story of honor, courage, and commitment, but this is not a collectively-held or widespread understanding of their story.

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