



so surely, a business without a boss would be a recipe for² anarchy and disaster³? Not so, perhaps, as a new bossless structure starts to challenge⁴ the oldschool hierarchy. **George Sandford** ditches⁵ the suit to track down⁶ the holacratic⁷ trendsetters⁸.

- ' when the cat's away, the mice will play wen ôa kæts a'wei ôa mais wil plei myszy harcują, gdy kota nie czują
- ² a recipe for sth a 'resapi fa(r) 'sʌmθɪŋ recepta na coś
- disaster di zo sta(r) katastrofa, klęska
- to challenge sth tə ˈtʃæiɪndʒ ˈsʌmθɪŋ podważać coś, stanowić wyzwanie dla czegoś
- * to ditch sth tə ditʃ ˈsʌmθɪŋ porzucić coś, odrzucić
- to track sb down to træk 'sambodi dagn wyśledzić kogoś, odszukać
- ⁷ holacratic "hola krætik holakratyczny (bez struktury stanowisk i hierarchii służbowej, o strukturze spółki)
- * trendsetter 'trendseta(r) prekursor mody, ktoś, kto wyznacza nowe trendy

Going Against the Grain9

Whilst10 there have been workers' cooperatives and companies with high worker democracy, the vast majority" of company structures have always been built on the good old-fashioned12 hierarchy. Job descriptions13 state to whom you report and organisational charts14 show you where you are placed in the corporate machine. Furthermore¹⁵, sophisticated¹⁶ reporting processes have been established", encompassing everything from weekly departmental meetings to annual performance reviews20. How could it possibly work without bosses, and would employees actually do any work without somebody breathing down their necks21? It goes against the grain to suggest otherwise22, but a number of companies are bucking the trend23 and in so doing24, creating a new cult that may signal25 the demise26 of the boss.

The Ghosts in the Machine 27 Come Alive

How has the strange phenomenon²⁰ come about20? Rewind30 to 1967 and the releases of Arthur Koestler's book, Ghosts in the Machine. In an attempt to32 explain his belief33 in the both singular34 and collective nature of thoughts, he used the Greek term35 holon, developing the concept36 to form autonomous37 creatures which were also connected to3 a larger non-hierarchical structure. Companies have been talking about creating a flatter structure for years, but what if we could really spread it out39 so that it was more like a dish than a ladder? This was the dream of Brian Robertson and founder of HolacracyOne (see QR code 1, page 62). His quest for a radically different, and he believes, more effective organisational structure, started in earnest42 with his Holacracy Constitution in 2009, in which he set out his key principles. It's a formidable45 document that reads like a manifesto46 and takes a lot of cerebral application. The essence48 of it is the following48 elements:

Employees are described as partners with defined roles that they 'energizes.' Each role has a domain⁵¹ and

Employees are described as partners with defined roles that they 'energize.'

accountabilities - but these are to the work, not a manager.

A role too big for one person to performs is called a circle structure, and divided intos a circle of non-hierarchical workers. If necessary, sub-circles can be created.

The governancess section seems something of a hall of mirrorss with self-governing circles, trumpings secretaries and super-circles. Maybe it just goes rounds in ever-decreasings circles.

The operational process seems to return to the sanity of clear project »

- * to go against the grain to goo o'genst oo grein iść wbrew naturze
- 10 whilst warlst choć, chociaż
- " vast majority va:st ma'dzorati ogromna większość
- 12 good old-fashioned X gud aold fænd stary, dobry X
- 13 job description d30b dr'skrip[n opis stanowiska, zakres obowiązków
- 14 chart tfatt schemat, wykres
- 15 furthermore ,f3;6a'mɔ:(r) co więcej
- 16 sophisticated sə'fistikertid skomplikowany
- " to establish tu r'stæbhí utworzyć, wdrożyć
- to encompass sth tu m'knmpəs 'snmθig obejmować coś, zawierać
- departmental disportimenti wydziałowy, wewnątrz działu (tylko przed rzeczownikiem)
- annual performance review 'ænjuəl pə'fɔ:məns

 [a'vju: ocena rocznych wyników pracy
- 21 to breathe down sb's neck to brito down 'sambadiz nek tu: zaglądać komuś przez ramię, stać komuś nad głową
- 2 to suggest otherwise to so'dgest 'nōowatz sugerować coś innego, wskazywać na coś innego (niż wspomniano)

- to buck the trend to bak do trend opierać się modzie/trendowi
- * in so doing in san durin robiac to, poprzez to
- 25 to signal sth tə 'sɪgnəl 'sʌmθɪŋ dawać sygnał (do) czegoś, sygnalizować coś
- 26 demise di'maiz koniec, śmierć
- ghost in the machine gaust in ôa ma' fin duch w maszynie
- 28 phenomenon fa'nominan fenomen, zjawisko
- ** to come about ta knm a'baut pojawić się, zaistnieć
- 30 to rewind to ri: waind przewinąć, cofnąć się w czasie
- 31 release milis publikacja
- in an attempt to do sth... In an a'tempt ta du 's∧mθiŋ próbując coś zrobić...
- 33 belief billif wiara, przekonanie
- 34 singular (singjələ(r) pojedynczy, jednostkowy
- 35 term t3:m pojęcie, określenie
- 36 concept 'konsept koncepcja, pomysł
- autonomous of tonemes niezależny
- 38 connected to sth ka'nektid ta 'sʌmθiŋ połączony z czymś
- ** to spread sth out to spread 'snmθιη aut rozproszyć coś, rozpowszechnić
- 49 founder 'faondə(r) założyciel
- 4 quest for sth kwest fa(r) 'sʌmθɪŋ pościg za czymś, walka o coś
- 42 in earnest in '3:nist tu: na dobre, na poważne (np. o czymś, co się zaczęło)
- 49 to set sth out to set 'snmθιη ant wyznaczyć coś, określić
- 44 principle 'prinsapl zasada, regula
- 45 formidable 'formidabl robiący wrażenie
- 46 manifesto ,mænifestav manifest (np. polityczny)
- ** cerebral 'serabral trudny, wymagający myślenia
- 48 essence 'esns sedno, istota (czegoś)
- following 'foleoin nastepujacy
- 50 to energize tu enadzarz wzmacniać, pobudzać
- ⁵¹ domain da'mein domena, dziedzina
- accountability a kaunta briati (czyjś) obowiązek, coś, za co ktoś odpowiada
- 53 to perform to po form wykonywać
- samθιη podzielić coś na coś
- 55 governance 'gavanans rządy, rządność
- 56 hall of mirrors had ev 'mirez gabinet luster
- ⁵⁷ to trump sth tə trʌmp ˈsʌmθɪŋ przebijać coś
- sto go round ta gao raund krążyć, robić kółko
- ever-decreasing 'eva(r) dr'krissij ciągle zmniejszający się, coraz (to) mniejszy (tylko przed rzeczownikiem)
- sanity sænati zdrowy rozum, rozsądek

management with the sharing of information and submission⁶¹ of deadlines⁶² and estimates⁶³ for completion⁶⁴.

The final part concerns adoption of the manifesto and reads very much like swearing allegiance to the party.

It seems that, in the absence of the boss and a traditional reporting structure, Robinson deemed it necessary to create a much more complex, albeit, democratic, mechanism to fill the gap, so can his system work in practice? Some companies are at least giving it a go.

Learning to Play Nicely

Menlo Innovations (see QR code 2) is a software design company of around 50 employees based in Michigan. Employees share a central workspace and work together in a non-hierarchical manner. On their website, they are keen to describe their culture and philosophy to their clients:

"Above and beyond the specific skill sets" and experiences someone might

- submission səb'mɪʃn podawanie, składanie (np. wniosku)
- " deadline 'dedlam termin ostateczny
- sa estimate 'estimat tu: szacunkowy termin
- completion kamiplijn ukończenie (projektu), oddanie (np. budynku)
- to concern sth ta kan'sa:n 'sʌm@iŋ dotyczyć czegoś
- adoption a'dopin przyjmowanie, przyjęcie (czegoś)
- to swear allegiance to sth tə swea(r) əˈliːdʒəns tə ˈsʌmθɪŋ złożyć przysięgę wierności czemuś
- in the absence of in δa 'æbsens av pod nieobecność
- ** to deem it necessary to do sth to dism it nesosori to du 'sʌmθiŋ uznać za konieczne (z) robienie czegoś
- 70 complex kompleks skomplikowany
- 71 albeit aczkolwiek
- 72 to fill the gap to fil do gap zapełnić luke
- ** to give sth a go ta giv 'snm@in a gau spróbować czegoś, dać czemuś szansę (używając tego w praktyce)
- 14 based in X beist in z siedzibą w X

bring, we look at kindergarten skills. Do you play well with others? Are you curious?"

"In the end, the secret to our culture comes down to" leadership. The

best type of leadership is that which helps those around you produce better results than they would on their own80. It's not about

hierarchy or authority ..."

Jason Stirman is the founder of a writing content*2 platform called Medium. He's another one who eulogises*3 about the holacratic model, replete with*4 constitution. One of the communication methods that the company uses for its 70 employees is a closed internal*5 network using Hatchpost, on which employees post opinions and suggestions that can receive likes from colleagues. He also

introduced a high five facility, which turns out not to be the bizarre, mechanical high five machine, but a board on which employees can write nice things about their fellow workers.

- 75 workspace 'watkspels obszar roboczy, miejsce pracy
- 16 keen kin chętny, ochoczy
- 77 skill set skil set wachlarz umiejetności
- ** kindergarten 'kındaga:tn przedszkolny, tu: dzieciecy
- ** to come down to sth te kam daon te 'samθin sprowadzać się do czegoś
- on one's own on wanz aon w pojedynkę,
- at authority or apreti władza, autorytet
- ez content 'kontent treść, zawartość
- ** to eulogise sth tə ˈjuːlədʒaɪz ˈsʌmθɪŋ wychwalać coś
- replete with sth riplict wiô 'sʌmθiŋ wraz z czymś, nie pomijając czegoś
- internal intain wewnetrzny
- * to introduce tu intra dius wprowadzić
- high five ,har farv (dawanie) piątki, przybijanie (piątki)
- " facility fa silet tu: infrastruktura
- ** to turn out to be sth ta tain aut ta bi 'sʌmθiŋ okazywać się być czymś/jakimś
- 90 bizarre brza:(r) dziwaczny

Working in circles seems to make worker harmony more important.

Namaste Solar (see QR code 3) is a solar panel installation company formed in 2005. Operating on a one employee,

one vote system for all decisions, in 2011, it went the whole hog and became a fully worker owned cooperative. The website's section on "our culture," provides an excellent insight into what the company values and how it operates:

"We value earned" leadership, strong teamwork", the process of building consensus¹⁰⁰, transparency¹⁰¹, and accountability."

Maybe there's nothing too radical there, but try this for size 102.

"Our culture and business practices are like poetry"."

"One of our company's core values is Fun: Namastaliens like to play and have fun togeth-

er, and we're fond of 104 engaging in 105 pranks 106 and tomfoolery 107."

Examples given of the wacky¹⁰⁰ atmosphere include workers returning from holiday to find their desk wrapped in¹⁰⁰

- " board bod forum (internetowe)
- 92 fellow worker 'felap 'wa:ka(r) kolega z pracy
- 93 to form tə fə:m utworzyć
- 4 to go the whole hog ta gan ŏa haul hog pójść na całość
- 95 to provide to pro'vaid zapewniać, dostarczać
- " insight 'ınsart wgląd, lepsze zrozumienie
- " to value sth tə 'vælju: 'sʌmθɪn cenić coś
- * to earn tu 3:0 tu: zasłużyć
- * teamwork timwa:k praca zespołowa
- 100 consensus kan'sensas zgoda, konsensus
- 101 transparency træns'pæransi przejrzystość
- try this (on) for size! trai dis on fa(r) saiz jak ci się to podoba?, no i co ty na to?
- 103 poetry 'pagatri poezia
- to be fond of sth to bi fond av 'sʌmθɪŋ lubić coś, przepadać za czymś
- to engage in sth tu in'gerdʒ in 'sʌmθiŋ zajmować się czymś, angażować
- 106 prank prænk psikus, figiel
- 107 tomfoolery tom'fu:ləri wygłupianie się
- wacky wæk szurnięty
- to wrap sth in sth ta ræp 'sλmθιη in 'sλmθιη owinać coś czymś

plastic, lockers¹¹⁰ filled with¹¹¹ Styrofoam¹¹², wheels removed¹¹³ from chairs and fake¹¹⁴ letters between colleagues – what fun!

On a more serious note, 115 pay differentials 116 are pinned to 117 a one to four ratio 110 between the highest and the lowest. Employees gain 110 more responsibility, based on earning the trust of others. Nobody has a private office and flexible 120 working hours are agreed by the group. At the same time, there's a high expectation 121 of getting the job done, even if that takes more time.

Going Round in Circles?

The new holacratic fashion has caught the eye¹²² of Forbes, Bloomberg, Wired and the BBC, who have all run stories on¹²³ the latest cool company culture but does it work and could you work within it? Having stepped inside¹²⁴ the circle of the cult, there seem to be some conclusions that can be drawn¹²⁵.

The companies that favour¹²⁶ this model are typically start-ups¹²⁷, technology based companies, environmental¹²⁰ products and services, media and consultancy. These tend to

- 110 locker loka(r) szafka (czyjaś w pracy/szkole)
- *** filled with sth 'fild wiö 'sʌmθiŋ wypełniony czymś
- 112 Styrofoam starrefeom styropian
- 113 to remove to rimury usunąć
- 114 fake feik fałszywy, sztuczny
- on a serious note on a 'starias naut mówiąc poważnie(j)
- pay differentials per diferențiz różnice płacowe
- to pin sth to sth tə pin 'sʌmθiŋ tə 'sʌmθiŋ przywiązać coś do czegoś, uzależnić coś od czegoś
- ratio 'reifiao relacja, stosunek (liczbowy/ proporcjonalny)
- 119 to gain ta gem zyskiwać
- 120 flexible 'fleksəbl elastyczny
- 121 expectation ekspek terin oczekiwanie
- to catch sb's eye to kæt∫ 'sAmbadiz ar zwrócić czyjaś uwagę
- 123 to run a story on sth tə rʌn ə ˈstɔːri on ˈsʌmθɪŋ opublikować artykuł o czymś

"One of our company's core values is Fun."



- to step inside of sth tə step in'sard əv 'sʌmθɪŋ wejść do środka czegoś, postawić gdzieś (w czymś) stopę
- to draw a conclusion ta dra: a kan'klu:3n dojść do wniosku
- 126 to favour sth tə 'feɪvə(r) 'sʌmθɪŋ preferować coś, wybierać (UK)
- start-up sta:t'Ap młoda spółka (zwłaszcza związana z Internetem)
- 128 environmental in, vairan menti związany z ochroną środowiska, ekologiczny
- to tend to be sth to tend to bi 'sʌmθɪŋ zazwyczaj być, najczęściej być jakimś/ czymś
- 130 inherently in hierently z natury
- manufacturing mænju'fækt[ərɪŋ produkcyjny
- 132 primary praimer podstawowy
- in turn in tain z kolei
- 134 outer 'auta(r) zewnętrzny
- unsupervised "An'su:pavaizd bez nadzoru, (pozostawiony) samopas

be 120 activities that inherently 130 require more employee dialogue than, say, a standard manufacturing 131 process or primary132 industry. Although, the traditional boss role is removed, it doesn't mean that there are no bosses. Usually, each circle has a leader, who may, in turn 133, be part of an outer 134 circle. Communication and cooperation are highly valued, so far from working unsupervised135, the bossless employee is likely to have to report to more people and account for his or her actions more frequently. The need to be sociable137 and liked may lead to favouritism138, and some animals being considered139 more equal140 than others. The void141 left by top-down142 management is filled with a constitution, which can create a new and even more cumbersome143 bureaucracy than before. It may work for some organisations and individuals144 who get a buzz out of145 constant discussion and participation, but I'm one old dog that prefers to report to one master. Conversely147, in the words of Hotel Impossible, hospitality148 expert, Anthony Melchiorri, "when something goes wrong, I want one butt¹⁴⁹ to kick." Give me hierarchy any day.

- tłumaczyć coś, tłumaczyć się z czegoś
- 137 sociable 'səʊ[əb] towarzyski
- favouritism 'feɪvərɪtɪz(ə)m faworyzowanie (UK)
- to consider sb sth ta kan'sida(r) 'sʌmbadi 'sʌmθiŋ uznawać kogoś za coś/jakiegoś
- 140 equal 'i:kwal równy
- 141 void void pustka
- 142 top-down top dawn odgórny
- 143 cumbersome 'kambasam nieporęczny, kłopotliwy
- individual _indi*vid3uəl osoba, jednostka
- 145 to get a buzz out of sth ta get a baz aut av 'samθɪŋ mieć z czegoś przyjemność, cieszyć sie czymś (pot.)
- 146 constant 'konstant stały, ciągły
- 147 conversely 'konva:sii odwrotnie
- hospitality hospitæleti gościnność, tu: przemysł hotelarsko-gastronomiczny
- 149 butt bat tylek