

Toward a Corporate Architecture of Multilevel Coherence: Organizational Design Based on the 16 S(i) in the Universal Coherence Project

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Note:
This essay continues the conceptual line initiated in *Elocuencia: la emoción de Coherencia Universal*.

Abstract:

This essay proposes a model of multilevel corporate architecture inspired by the 16 Simultaneous Structural Functions of the Universal Coherence Project. It argues that many organizational dysfunctions arise not only from people or leadership, but from structural misalignments across layers, timescales, functions, channels, and institutional memories. From that premise, it contends that the true foundation of an organization is not only the visible business front line, but also the material and human infrastructure that sustains it—such as cleaning, maintenance, and technical support—and it reinterprets the 16 S(i) as principles of institutional design oriented toward habitability, traceability, the redistribution of tensions, operational coherence, and structural protection, locating in S₉ the system's core of governance, memory, and resynchronization. The text thus advances a heuristic tool for designing, auditing, and correcting organizations in a fairer, more integrated, and more verifiable way, while arguing that performance, dignity, and stability are not opposing values, but inseparable expressions of the same structural maturity.

Keywords:
multilevel corporate architecture; organizational design; Universal Coherence; 16 Simultaneous Structural Functions; operational coherence; institutional traceability; material habitability; redistribution of tensions; structural governance; organizational noise; institutional design; multilevel assessment

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1. Introduction

1.1. The starting problem: organizations that function, yet fail to harmonize

One of the most persistent paradoxes of contemporary organizations, especially in contexts of high operational pressure, is that they can function for long periods without being truly harmonized. They may sustain their metrics, preserve continuity of service, maintain a formal appearance of order, and even meet strategic objectives while simultaneously accumulating misalignments that erode the system's intelligibility, fairness, and sustainability. The problem does not always take the form of an open crisis. More often, it appears as background noise: repeated frictions, interdepartmental tensions, fatigue distributed unevenly, decisions that resolve without correcting, and a diffuse sense that the organization works, but does so by relying on invisible layers of absorption, sacrifice, or improvisation. Systems theory has already shown that overall behavior depends less on isolated parts than on the way their relations and levels are organized⁽¹⁾; that is also the premise of this essay.

In corporate settings, this paradox is often misread for a specific reason: structural friction is translated far too quickly into a localized human problem. Where there is design incoherence, people speak of sensitivity; where there is unequal compression of time, of resistance; where there is channel opacity, of misunderstandings; where there are recurrent bottlenecks, the symptom becomes personalized and attached to a team, a manager, or a worker. This operation simplifies intervention, but impoverishes it. It allows the conflict to be narratively settled, even though it remains unresolved. When the visible symptom is mistaken for the cause, the relation that produces the phenomenon is lost. And when that relation is lost, the system may continue operating, but it understands less and less why it operates as it does⁽²⁾.

For that reason, the opening question of this work is not which people are failing, but which functions, layers, timescales, channels, and regulatory mechanisms have ceased to couple well with one another. The starting hypothesis is that many high-intensity organizations suffer not chiefly from a lack of effort or talent, but from structural disharmony across levels. The issue is not only whether the system produces, but what fruit its mode of production leaves behind: whether it generates clarity, stability without violence, reduced internal friction, and continuity with integrity, or whether it sustains performance at the cost of opacity, compression, uneven wear, and the silent degradation of the organizational container. Fruit operates here as a criterion of validation: an organization is not coherent because it says it is, but because of what its mode of operation consistently produces⁽³⁾.

1.2. From people management to multilevel structural design

Contemporary corporate literature has produced valuable categories—leadership, culture, climate,

(1) von Bertalanffy (1968) develops General Systems Theory and argues that a system's overall behavior depends on the organization of its relationships and on interaction across levels. von Bertalanffy, L. (1968). *General System Theory: Foundations, Development, Applications*. New York, NY: George Braziller.

(2) Deming (1986) locates performance and error within system design and management processes, rather than only in individual performance. Deming, W. E. (1986). *Out of the Crisis*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

(3) James (1907) formulates a pragmatic criterion of truth based on the effects and verifiable consequences of an idea in experience. James, W. (1907). *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*. Longmans, Green, and Co.

well-being, engagement, performance—but it often treats them as semi-autonomous domains when in reality they form part of a single fabric⁽⁴⁾. The result is a piecemeal management of complexity: well-being policies are launched without revising the architecture of time; cultural discourse is refined without touching the real traceability of channels⁽⁵⁾; managers are trained in listening without correcting the incentives that force them to filter; cross-functional coordination is demanded from structures that continue to operate as silos. What is missing is not always sensitivity, but a stronger relational grammar for thinking about the organization as a system. This is where the present approach becomes useful: it makes it possible to observe couplings, tensions, thresholds, alignments, and misalignments among distinct dimensions of the same phenomenon, without reducing it to a single explanatory variable.

This perspective requires shifting our gaze from people management to multilevel structural design. It is not a matter of denying human agency, but of restoring it to its real context. A person operates within a regime of timescales, channels, hierarchies, memories, and material limits that decisively shapes behavior. A middle manager does not coordinate in the abstract, but under pressure, interruptions, unstable coverage, and incomplete information flows. The front line does not merely execute tasks: it absorbs ambiguity, poorly resolved transitions, and decisions that descend without an equivalent redistribution of cost. Senior management, likewise, does not govern over a vacuum, but over an accumulated history of frictions, translations, and silences that can render the system opaque precisely where it most needs clarity. Read in this way, organizations cease to resemble a static administrative pyramid and begin to appear as multilevel, recursive, and adaptive functional systems.

Within this reading, S₉ is especially fertile. In corporate terms, it names not merely a hierarchical center, but a core of historical accumulation, governance, and resynchronization. It is not enough for levels to exist; what is needed is a functional center capable of reading the state of the whole, receiving feedback from the edges, reconfiguring, and restoring form without breaking continuity. An organization without such a core does not necessarily collapse immediately, but it does tend to replace governance with the blind accumulation of incidents, filters, and informal compensations⁽⁶⁾.

1.3. The forgotten layer: material and infrastructural support as the system's real foundation

A decisive correction introduced by this essay is to question a very widespread assumption in traditional corporate readings: that the most basic organizational level is the visible front line of the business. In practice, many descriptions of organizations begin with agents, sales staff, customer service, visible operators, or equivalent roles. Structurally, that identification is false. Before any business front line, there is a more basal layer, almost always undervalued, composed of cleaning, maintenance, gardening, facilities, technical and material support, replenishment, and other functions of physical and infrastructural support. It is not an accessory level; it is a condition of possibility for the rest of the system⁽⁷⁾.

(4) Schein (2010) defines organizational culture as a set of shared assumptions that shape perception, thought, and conduct in organizational life. Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

(5) Karasek (1979) shows that work experience depends on the combination of demands and decision latitude over work. Karasek, R. A. (1979). *Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign*. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24(2), 285–308.

(6) Simon (1962) describes the architecture of complexity and shows that many complex systems adopt hierarchical and multilevel structures. Simon, H. A. (1962). The architecture of complexity. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 106(6), 467–482.

(7) The International Organization for Standardization (2021) establishes guidelines for psychosocial risk management and places work design and environmental conditions at the core of occupational health. International Organization for Standardization. (2021). *ISO 45003:2021. Occupational health and safety management — Psychological health and safety at work — Guidelines for managing psychosocial risks*. Geneva: ISO.

An organization is sustained not only by flows of decision-making or cognitive work, but by material conditions of habitability, hygiene, order, safety, availability, and maintenance. This layer belongs to the basal relation that prevents the container from degrading those who act within it. In the grammar of the model, it can be read as the corporate translation of the base and support functions: that which renders the whole habitable before performance is even possible. Rendering this level invisible has profound effects. It not only symbolically diminishes those who sustain the container; it also introduces a design error. If the material base is treated as external to the organizational phenomenon, the organization begins to imagine itself as a network of processes and hierarchies floating above a mute infrastructure. That fiction lasts only while nothing fails. As soon as cleaning, maintenance, material availability, or physical safety fall out of coordination, the system discovers that its foundation was not scenery, but a basal function. For that reason, this essay adopts a different hierarchy of reading: the first level will not be the visible front line, but material and infrastructural support. Not out of moral preference, but out of structural necessity. Without a habitable base, there is no operational coherence; there is only continuity built on wear.

1.4. Rationale for the essay

There is a real shortage of organizational frameworks capable of simultaneously integrating material habitability, channel traceability, the distribution of time, institutional memory, governance, and the legitimacy of the system. Standard approaches usually treat these dimensions separately or group them under categories so broad that they end up concealing their interdependence⁽⁸⁾. This is especially evident in high-intensity organizations, where rest is treated as peripheral well-being, traceability as an administrative formality, coverage as a mere headcount variable, and culture as an aspirational narrative. The result is not only analytical fragmentation, but institutional fragmentation.

This work seeks to respond to that deficit for two reasons. The first is that it proposes a reading centered on relations rather than isolated entities. The second is that it offers a minimal grammar for thinking about simultaneous levels, operational cores, thresholds, redistribution, resonance, and support without falling either into empty holisms or abstract moralizations. The point is not to apply an elegant metaphor to the organization, but to test whether this grammar allows organizations to be seen and redesigned more effectively.

A practical reason must be added to this. In organizations where sustained pressure has become normalized, many incoherences cease to be visible precisely because they have been absorbed by the system. They become habitual. In that context, a useful model is not one that dramatizes without form, but one that restores legibility to what habit has rendered opaque. That is the role here assigned to the corporate translation of the 16 functions: to distinguish legitimate tensions from avoidable misalignments and to offer an architecture that enables redesign without unduly simplifying institutional complexity.

1.5. General objective

The general objective of this essay is to formulate a proposal for a multilevel corporate architecture based on the 16 Simultaneous Structural Functions, reinterpreted as 16 organizational

(8) Ballester, M., and Helbing (2015) show mathematically that disciplinary fragmentation limits scientific progress. Ballester, S., M., & Helbing, D. (2015). *On disciplinary fragmentation and scientific progress*. PLOS ONE, 10(3), e0118747.

“Yeses” capable of guiding the design, reading, evaluation, and correction of organizations subjected to high operational pressure. More specifically, the work seeks to translate a multiscale grammar into a verifiable organizational scheme in which performance, dignity, traceability, material habitability, and governance are treated as articulated dimensions of a single coherence rather than as separate or conflicting objectives.

1.6. Specific objectives

From that general objective, the essay pursues six specific objectives: to clarify the theoretical and methodological relevance of translating this framework into the organizational domain; to construct an operational correspondence between the 16 functions and observable corporate counterparts; to reorder level-based analysis by beginning with material and infrastructural support; to offer a less moralizing and more structural language for phenomena such as channel opacity, the two-speed organization, temporal compression, middle-management overload, procedural inequity, and the silencing of conflict⁽⁹⁾; to derive from this grammar policies, indicators, and verification criteria capable of distinguishing between real solutions and measures that exist only on paper; and, finally, to propose an implementation framework that allows the model to be used as a tool of institutional design without turning it into rhetorical ceremony.

1.7. Research questions

The questions guiding this essay are as follows: Can an organization be rigorously read as a multilevel system of simultaneous functions rather than merely as an aggregate of departments, people, or procedures? What changes in organizational analysis when the basal layer of material and infrastructural support is incorporated as an actual condition of the system? How is the criterion of fruit translated into the evaluation of corporate structures? What effects follow from understanding coherence as the reduction of structural noise rather than merely formal compliance? What role can S9 play, in corporate terms, as a core of accumulation, governance, and resynchronization? How should voice, time, memory, support, and traceability be redistributed across levels so that demand is not sustained through silent degradation? And finally, what conditions would a corporate architecture have to meet in order to be considered coherent not only by its discourse, but by the form and fruit of its functioning?

1.8. Working hypotheses

The main hypothesis of this work is that an organization becomes more intelligible, fairer, and more sustainable when it is designed and evaluated as a system of multilevel coherence rather than merely as a structure of authority, productivity, or declared culture. More specifically, it proposes that many of the dysfunctions typical of high-intensity environments—uneven wear, channel opacity, the silencing of conflict, recurrent overload, loss of voice, or reliance on patchwork fixes—can be better read as symptoms of misaligned functions than as personal or merely cultural problems.

A second hypothesis holds that fruit offers a particularly demanding criterion of organizational validation: an institutional measure should not be considered coherent simply because it exists in policy or in discourse, but because it verifiably produces clarity, reduced internal friction, stability

(9) Leventhal (1980) synthesizes normative criteria of procedural justice: consistency, bias suppression, accuracy, correctability, representativeness, and ethics. Leventhal, G. S. (1980). What should be done with equity theory? New approaches to the study of fairness in social relationships. In K. J. Gergen, M. S. Greenberg, & R. H. Willis (Eds.), *Social Exchange: Advances in Theory and Research* (pp. 27–55). New York, NY: Plenum.

without violence, useful traceability, and the capacity for correction without degrading the container. A third hypothesis proposes that rendering material and infrastructural support invisible constitutes one of the first incoherences of many corporate architectures, because it breaks the system's actual order of basal dependency. Finally, it is proposed that the corporate translation of S9 as an operational core may provide an especially fruitful key for thinking about governance: wherever there is no functional center capable of accumulating history, receiving feedback, resynchronizing layers, and restoring form to the whole, the organization tends to replace governance with inertia, filtering, or fragmentary reaction.

1.9. Scope, limits, and practical utility

This essay deliberately positions itself at the intersection of theory and application. At this stage, it does not seek empirically to demonstrate that every organization must be described exclusively through S(i), nor to turn the 16 functions into a closed ontology of business analysis. Nor does it seek to replace already established approaches in organizational sociology, labor law, occupational risk prevention, or strategic management. Its ambition is more specific: to offer a relational architecture robust enough to order those dimensions, reveal their misalignments, and enable a comparatively more coherent institutional design.

Hence the essay explicitly assumes the heuristic character of the model⁽¹⁰⁾. Its value does not depend on an abstract claim, but on its capacity to produce structural clarity, reduce interpretive noise, and serve as a bridge between complexity and legibility without impoverishing the phenomenon. This entails a simple methodological caution: the translation into the corporate domain must be rigorous but not rigid; formalizable but not ornamental; suggestive, but always testable by the fruit it leaves in practice.

The practical utility of the essay is twofold. For senior management and cross-functional areas, it offers a grid for distinguishing apparent stability from real coherence, existing protocol from effective protection, and growth in volume from integrative growth. For the most exposed levels, it provides a less blame-oriented and more structural language for naming tensions that would otherwise be interpreted as failures of individual adaptation. If this work fulfills its purpose, it will not be because it adds new vocabulary to the organization, but because it helps design structures that can bear high demands without deteriorating, can be corrected without having to deny themselves, and can hold their form without silently devouring the layers that make them possible

(10) Sivakumar and Boon (2024) place intellectual humility as a condition for epistemic fluency in interdisciplinary contexts. Sivakumar, K., & Boon, M. (2024). *The role of intellectual humility in promoting epistemic fluency for interdisciplinary engineering education*. *Frontiers in Education*, 9, Article 1395265.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Universal Coherence (UC) as a Relational Reading Architecture

In this essay, Universal Coherence is approached as a relational reading architecture rather than as a closed doctrine⁽¹¹⁾. Its usefulness does not lie in offering a total explanation of organizational reality, but in providing a criterion of observation capable of identifying patterns of alignment, misalignment, support, and degradation across different layers of the same system. What matters is not isolating each element, but understanding how it articulates with the others and what kind of form emerges from that articulation.

Applied to the corporate sphere, this perspective shifts attention away from isolated components and toward the quality of their relationships⁽¹²⁾. The company no longer appears as a sum of roles, processes, or departments, but begins to be read as a network of functional, material, temporal, and hierarchical dependencies. From that standpoint, the relevant question is no longer only which part is failing, but which relational configuration is producing a given effect.

This approach is especially valuable in contexts where the organization tends to moralize its experience too quickly. Rather than closing the analysis around profiles, styles, or attitudes, it compels us to observe which couplings sustain the system, where continuity breaks down, which layers bear the greatest friction, and what kind of fruit that way of operating leaves behind.

2.2. Coherence as Dynamic Alignment Across Layers

Coherence is not equivalent to uniformity, stasis, or the absence of conflict. Nor should it be confused with external discipline, superficial consensus, or formal compliance. In this work, coherence is understood as dynamic alignment across layers⁽¹³⁾: a mode of coupling sufficiently stable among material, functional, symbolic, temporal, and relational levels to sustain continuity without turning tension into degradation.

This alignment does not eliminate complexity; it organizes it. A coherent organization may pass through moments of pressure, disagreement, or reorganization, but it does so without depending on systematic opacity, without always unloading the cost onto the same nodes, and without destroying the basic conditions of habitability and legitimacy it needs in order to keep functioning.

In corporate terms, this means that coherence cannot be inferred from a single layer. Well-formulated values are not enough if the real management channels are opaque; good results are not enough if they rest on silent absorption; formal procedures are not enough if the system's concrete experience empties them of substance. Coherence requires looking at how the different layers of the organization sustain and correct one another.

(11) Calvo Espinosa (2026) defines Universal Coherence as a relational, heuristic, and non-totalizing architecture of reading. Calvo Espinosa, A. (2026). *Fundamentos ontológicos y epistemológicos de la Coherencia Universal (CU)* [Ontological and Epistemological Foundations of Universal Coherence (UC)] (Preprint v1.0). Zenodo. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.18702121

(12) Wildman (2006) presents a relational ontology in which relationships are more fundamental than entities considered in isolation. Wildman, W. J. (2006). *An Introduction to Relational Ontology*. Boston University.

(13) Strogatz (2003) describes spontaneous synchronization as the basis of emergent forms of order in dynamic systems. Strogatz, S. (2003). *Sync: The Emerging Science of Spontaneous Order*. Hyperion Books.

2.3. The Criterion of Fruit as Organizational Validation

Here, coherence is not validated by assertion, intention, or image, but by the fruit it produces⁽¹⁴⁾. In organizational terms, that fruit can be formulated as greater clarity, less unnecessary friction, greater capacity for correction, improved legibility of the system, and a form of stability that does not need to rely constantly on unequal wear, opacity, or diffuse structural violence.

This introduces a particularly demanding criterion of evaluation. A policy should not be considered successful merely because it exists in formal rules, is well drafted, or has been presented convincingly. It should be considered more or less valid according to the type of effects it leaves in practice: whether it reduces noise, improves the path of work, better protects the exposed layers, and allows the system to reorganize itself at lower hidden cost.

From this point of view, fruit functions as a corrective both against cynicism and against formalism. It prevents us from dismissing every measure out of prior suspicion, but it also prevents us from deeming any solution adequate simply because it has been institutionally declared.

2.4. The Distinction Between Source and Container in Institutional Design

One of the most fertile distinctions for institutional analysis is the one between source and container⁽¹⁵⁾. The container is the visible form: the procedure, the channel, the tool, the document, the body, or the structure. The source is the living dynamic that gives that form reality, makes it effective, and prevents it from emptying out into mere administrative presence.

When carried over to the company, this distinction helps explain why so many apparently sound structures yield poor results. A channel may exist without truly channeling; a policy may exist without redistributing; a protocol may exist without protecting; a meeting may exist without listening. The problem is not the form itself, but the confusion between having a form and having a living function.

This compels us to think about institutional design more rigorously. It is not enough to create containers; they must be hospitable to the source—that is, they must allow the dynamic they claim to sustain to unfold in reality. A mature organization does not eliminate containers; it tests them by their capacity to house real function.

2.5. The Container Error Applied to the Contemporary Company

When an organization confuses container and source, it falls into one of its most common errors: assuming that a problem has been resolved simply because a formal response already exists⁽¹⁶⁾. This error takes many forms. It may be a timekeeping system that leaves out precisely the most strained areas; an official channel that coexists with real management displaced into private messages; a work-life balance policy without sufficient redesign of coverage; or a declared culture that does not withstand the daily experience of work.

(14) Lissack and Letiche (2004) study coherence as a structural quality of organizations and as a way of reading complexity. Lissack, M. R., & Letiche, H. (2004). *Converging on Coherence: Gaining Perspective on Organizations and Their Study*. Emergent Publications.

(15) Korzybski (1933) formulates the distinction between map and territory and separates representation from the dynamic reality it seeks to describe. Korzybski, A. (1933). *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics*. Institute of General Semantics.

(16) Meyer and Rowan (1977) analyze formal structures as institutionalized myths and ceremonies capable of becoming decoupled from actual practice. Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). *Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(2), 340–363.

What is decisive here is not the rhetorical contradiction, but the structural consequence. When a company treats the container as absolute, it loses the ability to read whether the form is still alive or whether it has already been hollowed out. That makes it especially vulnerable to self-legitimation: the more procedures it accumulates, the easier it becomes for it to believe that the problem has already been addressed, even when the fruit remains poor.

For this reason, the container error should not be read merely as a moral criticism, but as a diagnostic category. It allows us to detect where the organization has replaced the real capacity to sustain something with the mere appearance of sustaining it.

2.6. The Company as a Multilayer System Rather Than a Sum of Departments

This essay begins from the idea that a company cannot be adequately understood as a sum of relatively autonomous departments. That representation may be useful for managing the formal organizational chart, but it is insufficient for structural understanding. An organization functions as a multilayer system⁽¹⁷⁾, in which each level conditions, supports, or limits the others.

This means that the material base affects visible operations; that visible operations condition managerial reading; that middle management influences the quality of feedback; that upper levels interpret and redistribute based on what they receive; and that cross-functional areas do not stand outside the phenomenon but participate in the concrete form it takes. No layer exists in isolation, nor can it be properly read apart from the path followed by information, workload, decision, and protection across them.

Thinking about the company as a multilayer system also allows an important correction: the basal layer does not always coincide with the most visible one. That is why this essay places the material and infrastructural support layer at the base, before the visible business front line. This is not a symbolic preference, but a structural requirement.

2.7. The UC Scale as a Comparative Reading Module

The metric and comparative dimension of this architecture is not developed here in its full formalization, since it has already received autonomous treatment in the specific module devoted to the Limited-Precision Universal Coherence Scale. In that work, the scale is formulated as a heuristic tool for relational reading and for comparing heterogeneous phenomena, designed to complement—and not replace—specialized metrics by means of a common structural criterion⁽¹⁸⁾.

Accordingly, this essay does not restate its architecture or formalization, but does presuppose it as an operational instrument of reading, normalization, and synthesis. The matrices, observables, and corporate profiles proposed here may later be articulated with that module without reproducing its technical development at this point. The scale is thus positioned as an available and active methodological antecedent: not as the central object of explanation in this chapter, but as an already consolidated resource for subsequent phases of evaluation, comparison, and visualization.

(17) Capra (1996) presents living systems as networks of interdependent relationships rather than as mechanical sums of parts. Capra, F. (1996). *The Web of Life: A New Scientific Understanding of Living Systems*. Anchor Books.

(18) Gigerenzer (2008) defends the value of heuristics for simplifying complex decisions and comparisons under conditions of uncertainty. Gigerenzer, G. (2008). *Rationality for Mortals: How People Cope with Uncertainty*. Oxford University Press.

2.8. The S(i) Model as a Minimal Structural Grammar for Complex Systems

Likewise, the functional grammar of the 16 Simultaneous Structural Functions (S(i)) already has its own essay in which its foundations, dynamic logic, operational centrality, and heuristic scope are developed. For that reason, the present work does not seek to present the model again or reproduce its complete formalization here, but to take it as an already elaborated reference structure for a different task: its translation into the field of multilevel corporate design.

For the purposes of this essay, one clarification is important. The organizational reading will rest on fifteen operational functions⁽¹⁹⁾ (S1–S15), organized into five triadic blocks, whereas S16 will be understood as the maximum emergent expression⁽²⁰⁾ of the whole, rather than as an operational layer equivalent to the others. This distinction does not alter the model; it specifies its institutional use.

What matters here, therefore, is not to reopen the exposition of the functional system as such, but to work with its transfer potential. The grammar is assumed as an already consolidated structural antecedent, and the next chapter will show how it can be operationally reinterpreted in organizational terms without duplicating the development already devoted to it elsewhere.

(19) Cummins (1975) develops functional analysis as the study of the differentiated contribution of processes and components to a system's capacities. Cummins, R. (1975). *Functional analysis. The Journal of Philosophy*, 72(20), 741–765.

(20) Anderson (1972) argues that, as complexity increases, properties emerge that do not derive linearly from the isolated analysis of parts. Anderson, P. W. (1972). *More is different. Science*, 177(4047), 393–396.

3. Foundations for a corporate translation of the S(i) model

3.1. Why the 16 S(i) Can Be Read in Organizational Terms

The organizational translation of this grammar is viable because the company shares with other complex systems several decisive features: multiple levels active at the same time, interdependence across layers, historical accumulation, a need for adaptation, thresholds of fragility, and pathways of support and regulation that cannot be understood from a single perspective⁽²¹⁾.

This does not mean that the organization is the model, nor that each function has a direct and closed equivalent within the organizational chart. It means something more modest: that the functional architecture offers a useful structure for reading more clearly how the company sustains, distributes, remembers, corrects, connects, and projects. Its legitimacy therefore lies in its explanatory and operational capacity⁽²²⁾, not in any supposed absolute equivalence.

For that reason, the translation must be approached as a rigorous but non-dogmatic exercise. Its aim is not to force reality into a pre-existing template, but to test whether this grammar helps identify with greater precision patterns that other frameworks leave dispersed or moralize too quickly.

3.2. From Simultaneous Functions to the 16 Organizational “Yeses”

For this reading to operate in institutional design, it is useful to formulate each function as a minimal structural “Yes.” Hence the move to the 16 organizational “Yeses.” This is not an attempt to turn the analysis into a manifesto, but to translate abstract functions into institutional conditions that are intelligible, observable⁽²³⁾, and open to debate.

One important clarification is needed here. The sixteen affirmations do not constitute sixteen homogeneous layers of equal rank. Fifteen of them correspond to operational functions that can be analyzed, coded, and tracked within the system. The sixteenth names the highest emergent expression of the whole, that is, the form of legitimacy, coherence, and projection that appears when the previous fifteen manage to articulate themselves with sufficient stability. Put differently: the first fifteen describe conditions of functioning; the last names the structural outcome of their coupling⁽²⁴⁾.

This shift offers a clear advantage. It prevents the architecture from remaining at the level of diagnosis and opens it to design. Each “Yes” is not a slogan, but a concrete question about what the organization affirms—or fails to affirm: whether it truly sustains a habitable base, protects an intact container, recognizes thresholds, redistributes tension, remembers with traceability, adapts without

(21) Perrow (1984) analyzes complex organizations and shows that the combination of interdependence, opacity, and multiple interaction makes linear readings insufficient. Perrow, C. (1984). *Normal Accidents: Living with High-Risk Technologies*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

(22) Weick (1979) presents organization as a continuous process of organizing, in which a framework is valuable for its capacity to orient reading, selection, and action. Weick, K. E. (1979). *The Social Psychology of Organizing* (2nd ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

(23) Mintzberg (1979) describes structural configurations and coordination mechanisms as identifiable and comparable conditions of organizational design. Mintzberg, H. (1979). *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of the Research*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

(24) Goldstein (1999) defines emergence as the appearance of new macroscopic patterns arising from interactions among system components. Goldstein, J. (1999). *Emergence as a construct: History and issues. Emergence*, 1(1), 49–72.

arbitrariness, or projects legitimacy without masking what happens inside.

The force of this translation depends on the “Yes” not remaining an aspirational word. Its validity will lie in whether it can be linked to observables, design decisions, and real changes in the system’s functioning.

3.3. Principle of Functional Simultaneity in Corporate Structures

One of the most important consequences of this translation is that the organization must be conceived from the outset as a simultaneity of functions⁽²⁵⁾. A company does not first activate a base, then a memory, then redistribution, then a network, and later projection. All of these functions operate at the same time, though not with the same strength or the same quality.

This point matters greatly because it explains why so many partial solutions fail. When only one dimension is improved—for example, traceability—without touching time, coverage, the path of the channel, or the protection of feedback, the system usually reabsorbs the improvement as added friction. Simultaneity therefore requires us to distrust any intervention that treats one function as if it were isolated from the rest.

It also explains why the same phenomenon can be read from several planes without contradiction. A channel problem may simultaneously be a failure of memory, a weakness of the container, and a symptom of insufficient interconnection. Simultaneity does not blur analysis; it makes it more faithful to the system’s complexity.

3.4. Principle of Recursion: Each Team as a Substructure

The organizational translation also requires the adoption of a principle of recursion. The company is not merely a whole that contains functions; each relevant substructure—an area, a team, a shift, a time band, a basal service, or an aggregating directorate—can internally reproduce the same logics of base, memory, threshold, redistribution, adaptation, or projection that appear in the whole.

This means that the empirical level and the functional level do not map one-to-one. A single function can unfold at several scales⁽²⁶⁾, and a single organizational unit can internally contain roles equivalent to different levels of the system. Thus, within maintenance there may be an operational base, immediate coordination, middle management, specific direction, and cross-functional articulation; the same may occur in operations, e-commerce, contact center, or any other relevant substructure. Likewise, in certain organizations there may be second-order directorates or groupings that integrate other directors without thereby altering the general functional logic.

Recursion is fundamental because it avoids two frequent errors. The first is to believe that a policy well formulated at the general level already exists everywhere in practice. The second is to think that a local problem necessarily defines the whole. The architecture becomes useful only when it can read both at once: the overall form and its internal reproductions.

3.5. Bottom-Up Support and Top-Down Regulation in the Company

(25) Thompson (1967) distinguishes forms of organizational interdependence—pooled, sequential, and reciprocal—and shows that their coordination requires several functions to be considered at once. Thompson, J. D. (1967). *Organizations in Action: Social Science Bases of Administrative Theory*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

(26) Beer (1972) formulates organizational recursion, showing that each viable unit may internally contain the same functional logic as the larger system. Beer, S. (1972). *Brain of the Firm*. London: Allen Lane.

An organization does not function simply because someone decides at the top and others execute below. Its form depends on a constant relation between bottom-up support and top-down regulation. Lower levels sustain, enable, and reveal. Upper levels orient, redistribute, limit, and correct. When one of these directions fails, the system may continue operating, but it begins to do so under a dangerous asymmetry.

This idea corrects two simplifications. On the one hand, naïve verticalism, which reduces the company to a descending chain of command. On the other, romantic horizontalism, which imagines that the base could regulate itself sufficiently if hierarchy did not interfere. The real organization needs both directions⁽²⁷⁾, though in a less blind and less unequal form.

Translated into design terms, this means that no layer should be treated as self-sufficient. The base needs a framework, but the framework needs real feedback from the base. Leadership needs criteria, but criteria need information that does not arrive fully dampened. Interdependence is not an abstract ideal; it is a condition of operation.

3.6. Organizational Coherence as the Reduction of Internal Friction

In this translation, organizational coherence is understood as the reduction of internal friction. This does not mean the absence of difference, conflict, or tension. It means reducing the unproductive noise⁽²⁸⁾ that the system itself generates through poor articulation among functions, timescales, levels, and channels.

This criterion is especially useful because it shifts the center of analysis from the appearance of order to the system's real economy. A company may look disciplined while consuming enormous amounts of energy in duplication, opaque pathways, translation overload, permanent patching, or the unequal absorption of wear. The reduction of friction detects this better than many more grandiose categories.

Moreover, this definition has the advantage of being operational. It can be observed in a reduced need for improvisation, greater reconstructive clarity, better circulation of feedback, a less unequal distribution of workload, and less dependence on quiet heroics to hold the form together.

3.7. From Moral Diagnosis to Structural Diagnosis

Once the architecture has been translated into the organizational field, the most important methodological move is to shift from moral diagnosis to structural diagnosis. This does not eliminate individual responsibility or suspend ethical judgment where needed. What it prevents is the interpretation from closing too quickly around persons while leaving intact the relations that produce the phenomenon.

In practical terms, this shift requires a reformulation of the questions. Instead of asking first who is failing, it is better to ask about the pathway, the channel, the time band, the coverage, the real time available, the exposed layer, or the function that has been weakened or overactivated. Only then can

(27) Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey (2007) describe organization as the interaction between emergent adaptive dynamics and administrative leadership structures. Uhl-Bien, M., Marion, R., & McKelvey, B. (2007). *Complexity leadership theory: Shifting leadership from the industrial age to the knowledge era*. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 18(4), 298–318.

(28) Kahneman, Sibony, and Sunstein (2021) distinguish noise as undesired variability generated by the system of judgment and decision itself. Kahneman, D., Sibony, O., & Sunstein, C. R. (2021). *Noise: A Flaw in Human Judgment*. New York, NY: Little, Brown Spark.

one distinguish whether what appears to be a personal oddity⁽²⁹⁾ is in fact a signal of poorly adjusted structure.

This reorientation has immediate organizational value: it allows intervention with greater precision and with less collateral damage. The company stops punishing or moralizing so quickly what it has not yet properly read. Far from weakening standards, that makes them more rigorous.

3.8. Risks of a Dogmatic or Merely Aesthetic Application of the Model

Every wide-ranging translation runs the risk of turning its own power against itself. In this case, the main risks are three. The first is dogmatization⁽³⁰⁾: treating the grammar as a closed correspondence rather than as a flexible structure of reading. The second is aestheticization: adopting the language, names, and appearance of the model without allowing it to unsettle the organization's real architecture. The third is methodological containerism: believing that merely naming functions, defining structural affirmations, or assembling matrices already amounts to having transformed the system.

These risks are especially serious because the model, precisely by being fertile, can generate a sense of understanding before sufficient testing has taken place. Hence the need to preserve three underlying demands: epistemic humility, contrast with observables, and validation by fruit. If an organization adopts the grammar but does not change the way it distributes time, power, workload, feedback, or traceability, then it has not implemented a more coherent architecture. It has only improved its capacity to narrate itself.

For that reason, this chapter does not close the translation as a finished truth, but prepares the next step: turning the grammar into concrete institutional architecture, while always keeping open the possibility of revision, adjustment, and critique.

(29) Ross (1977) describes attribution bias, whereby people tend to overattribute behavior to individual traits and underattribute it to the situation. Ross, L. (1977). The intuitive psychologist and his shortcomings: Distortions in the attribution process. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 10, pp. 173–220). New York, NY: Academic Press.

(30) Box (1976) argues that scientific models are useful instruments with explicit limits, not exhaustive duplicates of the phenomenon. Box, G. E. P. (1976). *Science and statistics*. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 71(356), 791–799.

4. Methodology

4.1. Type of work: an academic essay on institutional design

This work takes the form of an academic essay on institutional design that is both theoretically grounded and application-oriented⁽³¹⁾. It does not seek to provide a closed empirical validation of the model of the 16 Simultaneous Structural Functions in the corporate sphere, nor to replace specialized frameworks in organizational analysis, labor relations, occupational risk prevention, or process analysis. Its aim is more delimited: to build an architecture of reading and institutional proposal capable of translating this framework into an organizational language that is verifiable, transferable, and useful for redesigning structures subject to intensive pressure.

Choosing the essay form does not imply methodological arbitrariness. On the contrary, it requires the author to specify the kind of reasoning employed, the level of generality assumed, the rules governing the translation between the original model and the corporate domain, and the criteria by which a proposal may be considered more or less coherent. In that sense, the essay follows a logic of progressive formalization⁽³²⁾. It begins from a conceptual architecture, translates it into corporate functions, proposes observables and indicators, and finally derives implications for design, implementation, and audit. Its aim is not to close off the phenomenon, but to render it more legible without impoverishing it.

The methodology can therefore be defined as heuristic, relational, multilevel, and verifiable by fruit. It is heuristic because it does not seek to exhaust the phenomenon or turn the model into dogma. It is relational because it prioritizes couplings, tensions, and misalignments across layers. It is multilevel because it assumes that the organization can only be understood by attending to its distinct strata of support, operation, translation, governance, and guarantees. And it is verifiable by fruit because a measure is judged here not by its mere theoretical plausibility, but by the degree of clarity, stability without violence, reduction of friction, and institutional legibility it enables the system to produce.

4.2. Unit of analysis: organization, material and infrastructural environment, department, team, and interaction

The unit of analysis in this essay is not restricted to a single organizational level. Instead, it adopts a multilayered and nested unit of analysis⁽³³⁾. The organization as a whole constitutes the global unit of reference, but within it the essay distinguishes subunits that can be observed, compared, and coded in differentiated ways: the material and infrastructural environment, departments, teams, time bands, interactions, decisions, channels, and critical episodes.

This decision responds to the recursive nature of the model. If each function may itself contain an internal functional chain, the corporate reading cannot be reduced to the organizational aggregate; it

(31) Van de Ven (2007) formulates engaged organizational research as a deliberate articulation between theory building and intervention problems. Van de Ven, A. H. (2007). *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(32) Dubin (1978) presents theory building as a sequence of formalization that specifies units, relationships, boundaries, and possibilities for empirical testing. Dubin, R. (1978). *Theory Building*. New York, NY: Free Press.

(33) Hox (2010) develops multilevel analysis for nested phenomena, distinguishing the variation specific to each level and their cross-level effects. Hox, J. J. (2010). *Multilevel Analysis: Techniques and Applications* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

must also be able to descend levels without losing structure. The essay therefore works with at least five scales of observation:

- (1) The organization as a whole.
- (2) The material and infrastructural environment as the habitable base.
- (3) The department or functional area.
- (4) The team or operational substructure.
- (5) The interaction, scene, or concrete episode in which tensions, alignments, or design failures become manifest.

In practical terms, this makes it possible for the same phenomenon—for example, channel opacity, the compression of breaks, or the chronic persistence of a shift exception—to be analyzed both as a problem of the whole and in its particular manifestation within a team, a time band, or a specific sequence of events. The unit of analysis thereby ceases to be flat and becomes stratified.

The evidence considered is equally heterogeneous. Institutional analysis can draw on observables of different kinds: normative documentation, protocols⁽³⁴⁾, organizational charts, shift rosters, time records, tickets, channel logs, transcripts, observations of the material environment, operational metrics, self-reports, interviews, climate evidence, response times, minutes, and other organizational materials. The company is therefore treated as a mixed phenomenon⁽³⁵⁾, in which material, textual, behavioral, temporal, and relational variables coexist.

4.3. Organizational levels considered

The corporate translation of the model requires precise specification of which levels of the system will be taken into account. This point is methodologically decisive because it prevents the architecture from being built solely from the visible front line or from the executive summit, thereby reproducing from the outset the very bias the essay seeks to correct.

4.3.1. Level of material and infrastructural support

The first level considered is material and infrastructural support. It includes cleaning staff, maintenance, gardening, technical-material support, facilities, replenishment, and equivalent functions. Positioning it as the analytical base responds to a structural requirement: the organization cannot operate coherently if the container that makes it habitable, safe, and functional is left outside the analysis⁽³⁶⁾. This level is not ornamental; it constitutes the system's basal condition and is linked to the functions of foundation, integrity, and structural support.

4.3.2. Visible operational front line

The second level corresponds to the visible operational front line: agents, sales roles,

(34) Bowen (2009) systematizes document analysis as a qualitative method based on the review, selection, interpretation, and synthesis of organizational materials. Bowen, G. A. (2009). *Document analysis as a qualitative research method*. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40.

(35) Denzin (1978) formulates triangulation as a strategy for integrating different sources and types of evidence in the study of complex phenomena. Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

(36) Trist and Bamforth (1951), at the origin of the sociotechnical approach, showed that work organization and the technical-material environment constitute a single analytical problem. Trist, E. L., & Bamforth, K. W. (1951). *Some social and psychological consequences of the longwall method of coal-getting*. *Human Relations*, 4(1), 3–38.

customer service, support, or direct service execution. It is here that the relation between demand, time, channel, workload, and the absorption of misalignments is expressed most intensively. It is also the point at which many incoherences become visible that, in reality, arise from higher levels or from design deficits.

4.3.3. Middle management

The third level includes middle management, understood as figures of immediate coordination: supervisors, coordinators, team leaders, and equivalent roles. Its methodological interest lies in the fact that it operates as a layer of translation, buffering, and redistribution. These actors do not merely manage work; they sustain continuity, absorb tensions, and often compensate, informally, for the system's structural failures.

4.3.4. Head managers

The fourth level corresponds to the head managers, that is, the management layer that is no longer attached to micro-operations but still decides criteria, prioritizations, readings of recurrence, and the ways in which what happens below is either escalated or dampened. This level is key because it often determines what is treated as noise, what is interpreted as a structural problem, and what does or does not reach senior management.

4.3.5. Department leadership

The fifth level is department leadership, where decisions about structure, resource allocation, cross-functional coordination, and the strategic shaping of the area are concentrated. Within the logic of this essay, this level bears a special relation to the functions of dynamic accumulation, resynchronization, and institutional projection.

4.3.6. Cross-functional areas: Human Resources, Labor Relations, Occupational Health and Safety, Compliance, Systems, and Facilities

The sixth level corresponds to the cross-functional areas of guarantee and structural support: Human Resources, Labor Relations, Occupational Health and Safety, Compliance, Systems, Facilities, and other bodies that design or maintain the formal container of the organization. These areas do not simply amount to support; they form part of the framework that makes organizational life verifiable, protectable, or, failing that, opaque.

This ordering is not intended to establish a moral pyramid, but to construct a functional cartography of the company. Its methodological usefulness lies in allowing each phenomenon to be read not only by the place where it appears, but also by the path it follows across levels and by the kind of support or regulation it receives—or fails to receive—along the way.

4.4. S(i) → corporate function mapping method

The methodological heart of the essay lies in the procedure for mapping each structural function onto its corporate translation. This mapping is based neither on literal equivalence nor on arbitrary

assignment, but on a formalization sequence that begins with the structural role of each function and translates it into observable conditions of institutional design⁽³⁷⁾.

The method consists of five steps.

Step 1. Original functional definition.

The starting point is the structural role each function plays in the model: foundation, integrity, memory, threshold, accumulation, resonance, network, projection, and other equivalent functions.

Step 2. Institutional translation.

Each function is reinterpreted in corporate terms as a condition of organizational design. To facilitate its intelligibility and its minimal normative force, that translation is formulated as a structural “Yes.”

Step 3. Identification of observables.

Each “Yes” is associated with observable corporate manifestations: practices, processes, channels, times, records, forms of distribution, decision patterns, or climate effects.

Step 4. Coding or evaluation rule.

Without yet arriving at a closed metric, the essay assumes that each function can be evaluated through simple scales of presence, intensity, or stability. An initial way of doing so would be through basic ordinal coding⁽³⁸⁾—for example, from 0 to 3—combined with qualitative anchor descriptions.

Step 5. Integration into a structural profile.

The result of the analysis can be recorded as an S-profile of the case, team, area, or organization, following the logic of a 16-position vector. That profile would not be used as a simplistic score, but as a way of visualizing convergences, overactivations, inhibitions, or functional gaps.

As a complement, the essay also adopts the logic of the UC Scale as an auxiliary comparative module. The distinction between a pure structural mode and a reference-normalized mode is especially useful in the corporate field because it makes it possible to compare areas with one another, or episodes against a baseline condition, without losing the relational orientation of the analysis.

4.5. Validation criteria: coherence, traceability, fruit, and verifiability

To prevent the corporate translation of the model from degenerating into elegant but empty

(37) Adcock and Collier (2001) distinguish among concepts, observables, and indicators, and locate measurement validity in the quality of the link among those levels. Adcock, R., & Collier, D. (2001). *Measurement validity: A shared standard for qualitative and quantitative research*. *American Political Science Review*, 95(3), 529–546.

(38) Stevens (1946) establishes the ordinal scale as a form of ordered classification that allows presence or intensity to be graded without assuming equal intervals. Stevens, S. S. (1946). *On the theory of scales of measurement*. *Science*, 103(2684), 677–680.

language, the essay establishes four main validation criteria.

The first is coherence. A translated corporate function will be more valid insofar as it contributes to reducing internal friction, increasing process legibility, and sustaining continuity without structural violence. Coherence is not identified here with consensus, stillness, or formal compliance, but with sufficient coupling among layers, channels, timescales, and functions.

The second criterion is traceability. An institutional translation will be methodologically more robust to the extent that it can be observed, followed, and reconstructed through shareable evidence. This requires avoiding excessive dependence on private interpretations or undocumented memories. In this logic, traceability is not added bureaucracy, but the minimum condition that prevents institutional memory from being replaced by version, filter, or wear.

The third criterion is fruit. No translated function will be considered valid solely because of its theoretical elegance: it must produce observable effects that improve the system in a shareable, not merely declarative, way. The test lies not in the formulation, but in the clarity, stability without violence, and reduction of friction that the measure actually produces.

The fourth criterion is verifiability⁽³⁹⁾. Every structural proposal should be capable, at least in principle, of being checked through indicators, evidence, observations, or state comparisons. This requires declaring the unit of analysis, defining the mode of reading, establishing coding rules, and keeping the criterion constant throughout the study.

These four criteria operate jointly. A measure may be highly traceable and yet produce poor fruit. It may sound coherent and still fail to be verifiable. It may exist formally and yet do nothing to reduce friction. The method of the essay therefore requires that what should remain integrated in practice not be artificially separated in analysis.

4.6. Epistemological limits and the need for sector-specific calibration

Like any heuristic framework, this translation requires its limits to be stated explicitly.

The first is epistemological: the model should not be read as a definitive ontology of the company or as a substitute for specific disciplinary frameworks. Its value lies in functioning as a complementary tool of integration, not as a closure of the field.

The second limit is methodological. There is no single exact way to represent the system and no single correct visualization of its dynamics. This point is especially relevant in the corporate domain: different organizations, sectors, or environments may require different points of entry, different observational anchors, and different combinations of indicators. The model offers a common grammar, but it does not relieve researchers of the work of contextual calibration⁽⁴⁰⁾.

The third limit is practical. Every institutional application runs the risk of becoming a container: a discursive form that affirms coherence without producing it. That is why the essay

(39) Cronbach and Meehl (1955) develop construct validity as the requirement of coherence among theoretical definition, indicators, and empirical evidence. Cronbach, L. J., & Meehl, P. E. (1955). *Construct validity in psychological tests*. *Psychological Bulletin*, 52(4), 281–302.

(40) Levins (1966) shows that modeling requires choosing among realism, precision, and generality, and that every application requires adjustments according to domain and context. Levins, R. (1966). *The strategy of model building in population biology*. *American Scientist*, 54(4), 421–431.

insists that its corporate use will have value only if it is accompanied by contrast with fruit, observables, and real capacity to correct design. Without that contrast, the organization could appropriate the language of the 16 “Yeses” without altering its actual patterns of distributing time, cost, power, or voice.

Accordingly, this chapter does not close the field; it opens it in an ordered way. It provides a sufficient basis for moving from the conceptual framework to the deployment of the 16 corporate “Yeses,” while explicitly leaving open the need for sector-specific validations, case studies, indicator refinement, coding adjustments, and future comparative analyses. This openness does not weaken the method; it makes it more rigorous: clarity without rigidity, architecture without dogma, and proof by fruit rather than by proclamation.

5. The 16 S(i) as 16 “Yeses” of a coherent corporate structure

This chapter sets out the conditions that, taken together, allow us to conceive of a corporate structure capable of sustaining demand, complexity, and continuity without degrading the very system that makes them possible. For expository purposes, the fifteen operational functions are organized into five triadic blocks: S1–S3, S4–S6, S7–S9, S10–S12, and S13–S15. S16 will not be treated here as a subsection equivalent to the others, because it does not represent one more operational layer, but rather the maximum emergent expression of the whole—that is, the image of global coherence that appears when the other functions manage to articulate themselves with sufficient stability. This expository decision does not reduce the scope of the model; on the contrary, it makes its corporate translation more precise.

The functions that follow should not be read as a linear sequence or as a sum of isolated principles. They operate simultaneously, sustain or weaken one another, and produce a solid organization only when they manage to couple without generating excessive friction. A company may have great capacity for volume and a fragile material base; it may possess a strong formal framework and a poor institutional memory; it may sustain a sophisticated cultural discourse and yet lack real interconnection or sufficient redistribution of workload. That is why the interest of these fifteen affirmations lies not only in each of them separately, but in the overall architecture they draw.

5.1. Yes to a Habitable Base for the System

First triadic block: base, belonging, and integrity (S1–S3)

Every organization rests on a prior condition that is far too often taken for granted: its material habitability. Before speaking of strategy, performance, customer experience, or internal culture, a company must first be a clean, well-maintained, safe, functional, and physically sustainable environment⁽⁴¹⁾. This base is not decorative. It is the first condition of the system’s intelligibility. A dirty, deteriorated, unsafe, or materially neglected environment communicates disorder before any formal procedure even comes into play. More importantly, it compels the other layers to work atop a background degradation that eventually seeps through as fatigue, irritability, diminished quality, or progressive indifference.

Material habitability is not limited to preventing visible collapse. It includes the real availability of resources, preventive maintenance, the prompt resolution of physical incidents, basic ergonomics, environmental quality, replenishment of supplies, and institutional recognition of those who sustain that dimension. Wherever cleaning, maintenance, groundskeeping, technical-material support, or other basic physical-support roles are treated as a dispensable periphery, the organization introduces a foundational incoherence: it devalues the very thing that makes the rest operable. In practice, affirming this first condition means ensuring that the material base has a real place in design, planning, response times, and circuits of listening—and not only in the reactive logic of “fixing things once something has already failed.”

(41) Vischer (2007) proposes a theoretical model of workspace stress and places the physical environment as a constitutive part of job performance and well-being. Vischer, J. C. (2007). *The effects of the physical environment on job performance: Towards a theoretical model of workspace stress*. *Stress and Health*, 23(3), 175–184.

5.2. Yes to a Basic, Non-Humiliating Form of Belonging

An organization does not truly begin when it assigns functions, but when it defines what kind of belonging it offers to those who enter it. A basic, non-humiliating form of belonging means that no one should enter the system through structural disorientation, tacit contempt, degrading treatment, or the sense of being immediately absorbable into it. This applies as much to the material base as to the visible front line, to temporary roles as much as to permanent positions. Entry into an organization already reveals what that organization understands by person, by role, and by minimum dignity.

This condition is not fulfilled merely through a formal onboarding process. It requires something deeper: clear language, comprehensible rules, basic access to relevant information, non-humiliating treatment, recognition of the place each function occupies, and a real possibility of asking questions without being marked for it. A company that integrates people through haste, indifference, or naked hierarchy communicates from the very beginning that the bond is instrumental and unilateral. By contrast, a mature structure understands that initial belonging is not a sentimental gesture, but an organizational investment: it reduces future friction, improves understanding of the system, and prevents the bond from being built out of threat or pure defensive adaptation.

5.3. Yes to the Integrity of the Corporate Container

A company needs not only a habitable base, but also an intact container. The integrity of the corporate container refers to the system's ability to sustain clear boundaries, protect those who act within it, and prevent daily functioning from turning into a mixture of arbitrariness, improvisation, and informal force. An intact container is not a rigid cage, but neither is it a space where everything depends on the momentary criterion of whoever holds more power. It is a sufficiently stable framework so that work does not become continual exposure to ambiguity, bias, or procedural capture.

This integrity is expressed on several planes. On the relational plane, it means that authority is not exercised outside the framework that legitimizes it. On the procedural plane, it implies that what matters does not depend solely on opaque conversations, decisions without trace, or non-auditable arrangements. On the preventive plane, it means that the system does not wait for evident damage before recognizing that something is failing. And on the symbolic plane, it means that the organization does not structurally contradict itself by asking for professionalism from a container it does not itself maintain professionally. Where this integrity is lacking, the company may continue operating, but it no longer protects: it exposes. And a company that exposes people systematically eventually degrades its own authority.

5.4. Yes to Dynamic Balance in Time and Workload

Second triadic block: temporal balance, memory, and growth (S4–S6)

One of the clearest signs of organizational maturity lies in how a company distributes time. Dynamic balance between time and workload⁽⁴²⁾ does not mean uniformity or the absence of peaks, but the capacity to prevent demand from being sustained through permanent compression, illusory

(42) Siegrist (1996) formulates the effort–reward model and describes the effects of sustained imbalance between demands and compensation at work. Siegrist, J. (1996). *Adverse health effects of high-effort/low-reward conditions*. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 1(1), 27–41.

rest, or unilateral absorption of overexertion. Wherever time is measured with precision in order to demand, but not with the same seriousness in order to protect, compensate, or close cycles, a deep structural incoherence appears. The organization begins to look very exacting downward and very ambiguous upward.

This balance requires real rather than merely formal breaks, sufficient transitions between tasks, protection of the end of the shift, room to close one piece of work before immediately entering the next, and clear criteria for redistributing overload. It also requires recognizing that time is not lived in the same way across all areas: what appears in some departments as informal flexibility may, in others, amount to chronic compression. A coherent company does not need to artificially homogenize all functions, but it must ensure that operational differences do not become structural inequality in temporal dignity. Some people's time cannot be worth more than others' simply because some are closer to the narrative center of the business.

5.5. Yes to Traceable Institutional Memory

Without traceable memory⁽⁴³⁾, there is no organizational learning, only repetition with wear. Institutional memory is not a dead archive nor a bureaucratic accumulation of documents. It is the system's capacity to preserve decisions, record pathways, identify patterns, and prevent every problem from having to begin again from zero because nothing was fixed where it should have been. When an organization operates on oral memory, private messages, local interpretations, or excessive dependence on particular individuals, it is not saving bureaucracy: it is renouncing one of the basic conditions of its own intelligence.

The traceability of memory requires that relevant decisions, operational changes, time overruns, material incidents, critical thresholds, and corrective processes leave a useful trace. Not just any trace, nor trace through indiscriminate accumulation, but a reconstructable and accessible trace for those who legitimately need to act on it. A healthy institutional memory reduces arbitrariness, limits informal power, and protects the system against strategic amnesia. It also allows something fundamental: separating the real history of a phenomenon from whichever version is most convenient at a given moment. Wherever the organization does not remember in a traceable way, it ends up repeating problems that it later interprets as isolated cases.

5.6. Yes to Coherent Growth

Growing is not merely a matter of increasing volume, opening new lines, or adding more layers. To grow coherently means expanding capacity without losing legibility, without generating permanent exceptions, and without turning complexity into opacity. Many organizations scale faster than they integrate. The result is growth that increases surface area but weakens structure: more tools, more procedures, more actors, and more dependence on informal fixes to hold together what expanded without sufficient internal translation.

Coherent growth requires that every expansion be accompanied by functional integration. If a new tool does not include precisely the areas under greatest strain, growth is only apparent. If a new policy is deployed over a structure incapable of absorbing it, growth is merely discursive. If

(43) Walsh and Ungson (1991) define organizational memory as the set of repositories and pathways through which an organization retains information useful for future action. Walsh, J. P., & Ungson, G. R. (1991). *Organizational memory*. *Academy of Management Review*, 16(1), 57–91.

increasing volume always falls back on the same layers without an equivalent redesign of support, the organization is not growing: it is concentrating fragility. The true test of growth lies in whether, as the company becomes more complex, it also becomes more intelligible, more traceable, and more capable of redistributing cost without deteriorating its base.

5.7. Yes to the Redistribution of Tension and Resources

Third triadic block: redistribution, threshold, and operational core (S7–S9)

Every organization generates tension. The difference between a mature structure and a fragile one does not lie in eliminating it, but in how it redistributes it. When tension is always concentrated in the same teams, the same shifts, the same language groups, the same channels, or the same people, the system ceases to behave like a network and begins to behave like a funnel⁽⁴⁴⁾. The redistribution of tension and resources means precisely the opposite: detecting where the load is accumulating, relieving bottlenecks, redesigning coverage, and preventing some people's difficulty from being normalized as a permanent obligation.

Redistribution does not mean mechanically “sharing out discomfort,” but adjusting capacity to real need. This requires looking beyond nominal headcount and observing effective availability, coverage by time band, complexity by work type, the saturation of certain profiles, and the frequency with which particular layers absorb overtime, ambiguity, or exposure. When a company does not redistribute, it ends up generating two corrosive effects: lateral resentment and vertical blindness. Teams feel that whatever the system fails to solve always falls back on them, while upper levels interpret that recurrence as a local problem rather than as a signal of insufficient design.

5.8. Yes to Recognizing Critical Thresholds Before Collapse

Systems rarely collapse without warning. What happens more often is that they fail to read their own thresholds in time. A critical threshold is not only a number, a serious incident, or a formal complaint. It is the point beyond which the system ceases to absorb tension in a reversible way and begins to reorganize regressively: more opacity, more fatigue, more silencing, more filtering, more arbitrariness, or greater deterioration of the organizational bond. Recognizing critical thresholds before collapse⁽⁴⁵⁾ is a capacity of governance, not a matter of soft sensitivity.

This requires technical indicators, yes, but also relational and temporal ones: breaks that no longer feel restorative, overtime that becomes structural, shift rotations that cease to rotate, private channels that become the main operational route, teams that stop escalating problems because they no longer expect a response, or support roles living permanently in reaction mode. A system that does not recognize its thresholds only corrects once the damage is far more costly. A mature organization, by contrast, makes early detection part of its structure: it listens to weak signals, cross-checks them with data, and activates responses before deterioration becomes an identity of functioning.

(44) Galbraith (1974) analyzes organizational design as a response to information-processing and coordination demands under uncertainty. Galbraith, J. R. (1974). *Organization design: An information processing view*. *Interfaces*, 4(3), 28–36.

(45) Scheffer et al. (2009) synthesize early-warning signals of critical transitions in complex systems and show that many collapses are preceded by detectable indicators. Scheffer, M., Bascompte, J., Brock, W. A., Brovkin, V., Carpenter, S. R., Dakos, V., Held, H., Van Nes, E. H., Rietkerk, M., & Sugihara, G. (2009). *Early-warning signals for critical transitions*. *Nature*, 461(7260), 53–59.

5.9. Yes to an Operational Core That Remembers, Decides, and Resynchronizes

Every organization needs a real core of accumulation, interpretation, and correction. A hierarchical chain is not enough, nor are multiple decision-making spaces if none of them assumes the function of integrating history, feedback from the base, interdepartmental tensions, and the need for reconfiguration. A healthy operational core is not a command center that merely issues orders; it is a point of resynchronization. It receives information from the system, turns it into criterion⁽⁴⁶⁾, restores form, and prevents each level from becoming trapped in its own partiality.

When this function is absent, the company becomes reactive. Incidents accumulate, but do not become learning; tensions are known, but not integrated; decisions are made, but do not reorganize the whole; history exists, but does not orient the future. In that scenario, teams work and managers manage, but the system does not learn. A coherent operational core requires stable review spaces, the capacity to distinguish pattern from anecdote, the authority to redistribute, and the willingness to turn feedback into redesign. The point is not to centralize everything, but to ensure that there is an institutional place from which the system can once again listen to itself without depending solely on noise, crisis, or the particular person who happens to be pushing at that moment.

5.10. Yes to Continuous Adaptation Without Arbitrariness

Fourth triadic block: adaptation, resonance, and interconnection (S10–S12)

Every organization needs to adapt. What distinguishes it is not whether it changes, but how it changes. Continuous adaptation without arbitrariness means that the system can adjust procedures, coverage, rhythms, or priorities without turning each modification into an unpredictable shock. Wherever everything is “always changing,” but without clear criteria, sufficient communication, and traceability, adaptation ceases to be plasticity and becomes structural instability. The organization no longer adjusts; it drifts.

Good adaptation is neither immobility nor improvisation. It requires pilots, impact review, intelligible criteria, absorption time, and clarity about what is being modified, why, for whom, and with what subsequent evaluation. It also requires protecting the base from arbitrariness: one cannot demand continuous flexibility from those who already live under high temporal and relational compression. A mature company understands that adaptation should reduce noise, not multiply it; it should organize the system better, not add layers of uncertainty that are later compensated through obedience, fatigue, or everyday heroics.

5.11. Yes to Verifiable Cultural Resonance

The culture of an organization cannot be reduced to its aspirational language. True culture is the stable way in which the system resolves tensions, distributes legitimacy, and makes what it says coincide—or fail to coincide—with what it actually allows. To speak of verifiable cultural resonance implies requiring that tone, form, decision, and consequence maintain a minimum alignment. It is not enough to proclaim respect, care, listening, or collaboration; those words must be recognizable in

(46) Barnard (1938) describes the executive function as the task of coordination, maintenance of communication, and formulation of cooperative purpose within the organization. Barnard, C. I. (1938). *The Functions of the Executive*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

the everyday form of work, in the quality of channels, in the way corrections are made, in who can speak without disproportionate cost, and in how conflict is interpreted when it appears.

Cultural resonance is verifiable when it does not depend on the charisma of a few people or on exceptional moments. It becomes visible when the system as a whole emits a relatively consistent signal: the same criterion governs both the base and the top; what is demanded is also practiced; what is promised leaves a trace in experience. When that does not happen, one of the most corrosive forms of incoherence appears: the split between declared culture and operational culture. The former is displayed; the latter is what truly rules. A serious organization should always evaluate the distance between the two, because a large share of its structural noise often resides there.

5.12. Yes to Real Interconnection Between Layers and Areas

A company does not become complex because it has many departments, but because it does or does not manage to make those departments function as parts of a single system. Real interconnection between layers and areas is not only a question of communication; it is a question of architecture⁽⁴⁷⁾. It means that relevant information circulates through useful routes, that problems do not remain trapped in silos, that the front line can influence criterion without always passing through filters that empty it out, and that cross-functional areas do not operate as foreign bodies with respect to operational reality.

Lack of interconnection produces two complementary pathologies. On the one hand, it turns certain teams or time bands into isolated spaces that sustain the service without really participating in the construction of organizational vision. On the other hand, it forces error correction to depend on the heroism of bridge people who connect worlds the design never connected. Mature interconnection requires appropriate channels, sufficient shared language, spaces of translation between levels, and a basic rule: whatever affects several planes of the system cannot be held hostage within just one of them. Wherever the organization fragments too much, the cost reappears as misunderstanding, duplication, silence, and decisions that arrive late or distorted.

5.13. Yes to an Integrated Complex Organization

Fifth triadic block: integration, volume, and guarantees (S13–S15).

Complexity is not a problem in itself. The problem arises when the organization becomes complex but not integrated. An integrated complex organization is one capable of sustaining diversity of functions, specialization, volume, cross-functionality, and multiple tiers without turning that complexity into chronic fragmentation. Integration does not mean making everything uniform, but articulating dependencies in such a way that the whole does not depend on a permanent sum of patches, reinterpretations, and local corrections.

This point is decisive because many modern companies seem sophisticated by accumulation: more systems, more layers of control, more procedures, more reporting, more tools. But if none of this is truly integrated, complexity becomes a refined form of disorder. An integrated organization can be recognized by its ability to make different functions compatible without some of them being systematically sustained at the expense of others. It can also be recognized by the possibility that an

(47) Burt (1992) analyzes how connection structure conditions access to information, coordination, and bridging capacity between separate parts of a network. Burt, R. S. (1992). *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

improvement in one part does not destabilize the rest of the system. Integration, in this sense, is a criterion of maturity⁽⁴⁸⁾: it is measured not by how many pieces exist, but by how much noise they generate when made to coexist.

5.14. Yes to Managing Volume Without Saturating the System

Every organization under high demand must resolve a basic tension: how to absorb volume without turning flow into continuous saturation. Managing volume is not simply a matter of serving more, selling more, or closing more cases. It is a matter of doing so without the increase in load compressing times, margins, and capacities to such an extent that the organization ends up operating permanently above its healthy threshold. When volume becomes a constant justification for deteriorating rest, traceability, coverage, or relational quality, the company may continue getting work out, but it is no longer managing well: it is shifting the cost of scale onto the bodies and relationships most exposed.

Good volume management requires fine-grained staffing, analysis by time band and type of work, specific coverage where peaks concentrate, review of task chaining, and the ability to distinguish between sustainable intensification and structural saturation. It also requires institutional honesty: if the system continually needs the base to absorb what the structure failed to foresee, the problem is not only business pressure. It is that the business is resting on insufficient design. True scalability does not consist in extracting more output with the same wear, but in increasing capacity without degrading the conditions that make continuity possible⁽⁴⁹⁾.

5.15. Yes to a Structural Framework of Guarantees

No complex organization can sustain coherence without a sufficiently strong framework of guarantees. That framework includes, among other things, Human Resources, Labor Relations, Occupational Health and Safety, Compliance, Systems, corporate Facilities coordination, and all the functions that ensure that the institutional container does not depend solely on local discretion. But affirming a framework of guarantees does not mean multiplying empty formalities. It means building conditions so that the system has limits, memory, review, and real protection when operations become strained or when power attempts to escape its own channels⁽⁵⁰⁾.

A mature framework of guarantees does several things at once. First, it prevents certain rights from depending on a manager's mood or on the current level of pressure. Second, it corrects the bias that leaves out of common infrastructure precisely the most complex areas. Third, it offers channels of review and escalation where what matters can be addressed without remaining trapped in the chain that produces it. And fourth, it protects the organization itself against its tendency to normalize exceptions until they become ordinary practice. When this framework fails, the company may retain procedures, but it loses real guarantee. And when real guarantee is lost, authority ceases to rest on structural legitimacy and increasingly rests on force, opacity, or the fatigue of others.

(48) Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) show that organizational complexity requires the articulation of differentiation and integration so that specialized units can operate as a coherent whole. Lawrence, P. R., & Lorsch, J. W. (1967). *Organization and Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration*. Boston, MA: Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University.

(49) Little (1961) demonstrates a fundamental relationship among flow, work in process, and time in queueing systems. Little, J. D. C. (1961). *A proof for the queueing formula: $L = \lambda W$* . *Operations Research*, 9(3), 383–387.

(50) Selznick (1957) understands institutionalization as the incorporation of values, commitments, and safeguards that stabilize the organization beyond circumstance and local discretion. Selznick, P. (1957). *Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

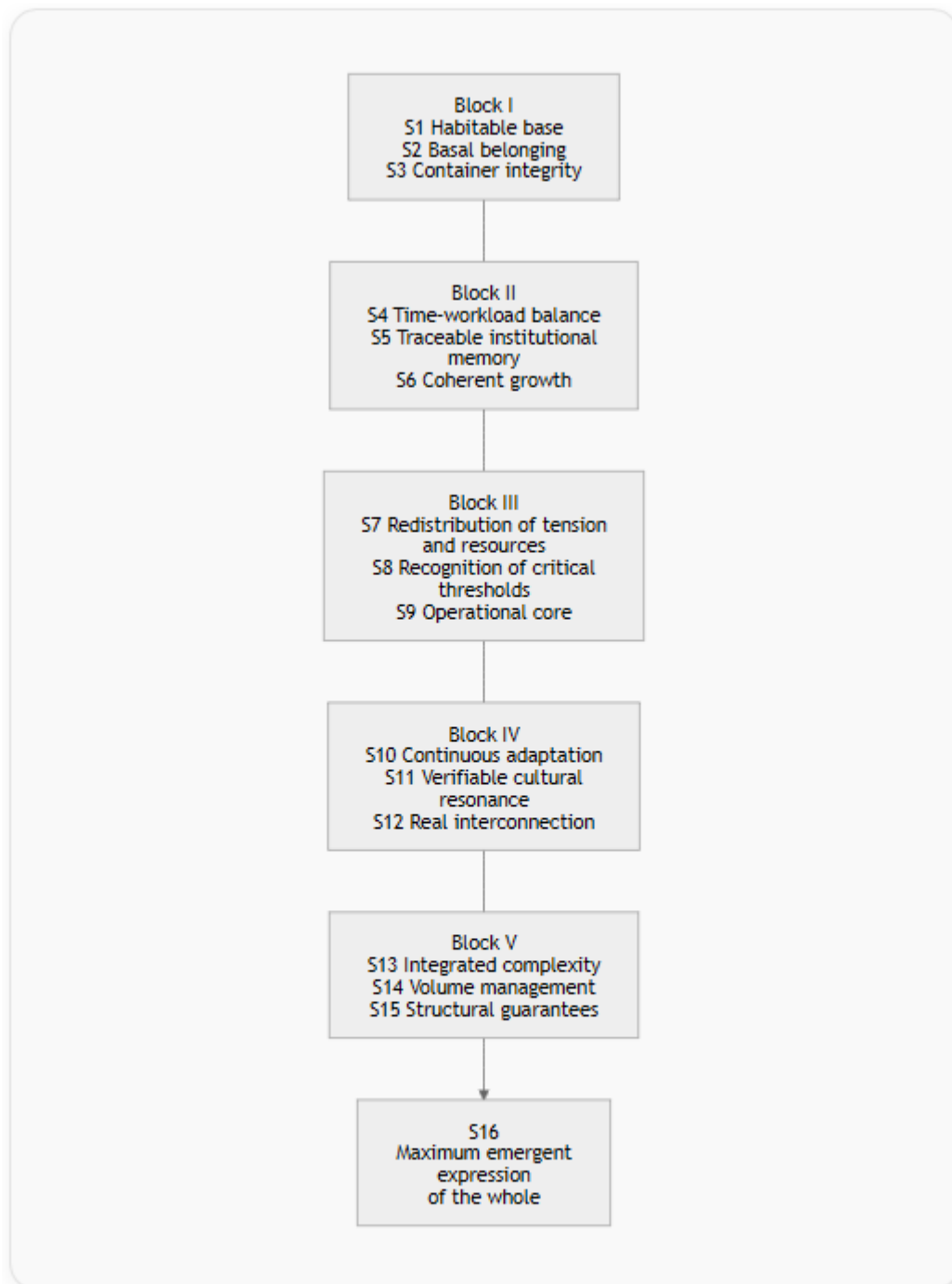


Figure 1. Corporate architecture of multilevel coherence: fifteen operational functions arranged in five triadic blocks, with S16 as the maximum emergent expression of the whole.

Note. The figure is intentionally stacked vertically to fit a portrait page. The vertical arrangement is expository rather than temporal or causal: the five blocks are simultaneous and mutually conditioning.

Maximum Legitimate Expression of the Whole

The maximum projection of an organization should not be understood here as one more layer of

the system, nor as an operational level equivalent to the preceding ones. It is the maximum emergent expression of the whole: the structural image the organization projects when its functions of base, memory, redistribution, adaptation, integration, and institutional guarantee manage to couple with sufficient coherence. In that sense, projection is not manufactured autonomously; it emerges from the living form of the system.

This means that a company's external legitimacy does not depend only on its public narrative, its brand reputation, or its ability to present itself as orderly, innovative, or valuable. It depends, above all, on how much of that image can be sustained without concealing or contradicting what occurs inside. Wherever external projection needs to separate itself too much from internal experience, the organization enters a regime of cosmetic masking: it appears more coherent than it is. By contrast, when projection results from a sufficiently healthy articulation of the other functions, the organization persuades without relying excessively on propaganda, because its fruit supports it.

For that reason, this maximum expression should not be audited as though it were just another function. It should be read as a synthesis: as the visible result of what the whole has or has not managed to sustain. A company reaches its best projection when it can present itself outwardly without having to systematically deny the way it organizes time, workload, voice, the material base, pathways, and guarantees inside. Legitimacy is not, then, a communication operation; it is an emergent form of structural coherence.

6. Internal dynamics of the corporate structure

If the previous chapter described the sixteen conditions an organization must affirm in order to sustain itself coherently, this chapter turns to something equally important: how those conditions interact with one another. For a corporate structure does not fail only because certain functions are missing; it also fails because of the way those functions activate, block, substitute for, or distort one another. In practice, almost no organizational problem appears as a pure absence. What one usually finds instead are unbalanced configurations: an excess of formal framework without real listening, a strong capacity for volume without redistribution of tension, formal memory without living traceability, adaptation without criterion, or reputational projection sustained on a base that is internally worn down.

For that reason, thinking about the internal dynamics of a company requires moving beyond two simplifications. The first is the linear view, according to which each layer acts on the next in a descending and relatively predictable way. The second is the fragmented view, which treats each area, function, or conflict as though it could be understood in isolation. A real organization resembles a system of pulses, returns, accumulations, thresholds, and readjustments more than it does a stable chain of commands. Its coherence depends less on static control than on its ability to receive information from multiple layers, integrate tensions without denying them, and restore form to the whole before noise hardens into identity⁽⁵¹⁾.

6.1. The Company as a Structural Pulse Rather Than a Rigid Hierarchy

The most common image of the company remains that of a hierarchy: a base that executes, a middle chain that coordinates, and a summit that decides. That image is not false, but it is insufficient for understanding the system's real dynamics. What happens in high-intensity organizations resembles a pulse⁽⁵²⁾ more than a staircase. There are phases of activation, points of accumulation, flows moving downward, returns moving upward, zones that absorb more than they should, and moments when the whole must be resynchronized so as not to operate permanently out of step with itself.

Thinking of the company as a structural pulse makes several phenomena easier to grasp. It helps explain why an apparently clear instruction may reach the base in distorted form; why a minor incident may in fact reveal accumulated saturation; why leadership may believe the system is stable while certain teams are living at the edge of a threshold; or why the organization may continue functioning for a long time even after it has lost the ability to correct itself without wear. The dynamic is not unidirectional⁽⁵³⁾. What happens below alters the room for maneuver in the middle; what happens in the middle filters what reaches the top; and what is decided at the top changes the absorption conditions of every lower layer.

(51) Sterman (2000) shows that, in complex systems, behavior emerges from feedback loops, accumulations, and delays more than from simple linear chains. Sterman, J. D. (2000). *Business Dynamics: Systems Thinking and Modeling for a Complex World*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

(52) Gersick (1991) proposes the punctuated equilibrium paradigm and describes organizational change as an alternation between phases of relative stability and moments of intense reconfiguration. Gersick, C. J. G. (1991). *Revolutionary change theories: A multilevel exploration of the punctuated equilibrium paradigm*. *Academy of Management Review*, 16(1), 10–36.

(53) Burns and Stalker (1961) distinguish mechanistic and organic forms of organization and show that changing environments require less rigid and less purely top-down dynamics. Burns, T., & Stalker, G. M. (1961). *The Management of Innovation*. London: Tavistock.

This perspective also corrects a frequent error: the belief that the company changes because one layer decides and the others simply execute. In reality, effective organizational change occurs when the impulse to transform is able to pass through the system without breaking it, and when the return of reality is able to make its way back to the center without being cancelled out by filters, opacity, or fear. A mature company is not one that merely “commands well” in the abstract, but one that has learned to pulse without shattering, to receive without collapsing, and to reorganize without denying what its own operation is telling it.

6.2. The Functional Centrality of S₉ in Corporate Governance

Within this dynamic, the central function cannot be confused simply with the highest authority. The center is not merely whoever occupies the top of the organizational chart, but the point at which the organization accumulates history, reads patterns, integrates return, and decides on reconfiguration. In this essay, that function has been translated as the operational core. Its task is not to control every detail or resolve every incident, but to prevent the system from depending exclusively on local reactions, tactical fixes, or partial interpretations.

When that core functions well, the organization does not merely govern; it remembers. It does not merely receive information; it turns it into criterion⁽⁵⁴⁾. It does not merely correct cases; it detects patterns. It does not merely solve urgencies; it reorders conditions so that certain urgencies cease to recur. This demands a far more exacting form of governance than the mere monitoring of indicators. It requires that the center have real access to the system’s lived experience, that it be able to distinguish anomaly from structure, and that it possess sufficient legitimacy to redistribute cost, revise frameworks, and protect vulnerable zones before deterioration becomes irreversible.

When this central function fails, the company is not left without governance, but it is left without resynchronization. Much is decided, but little is learned. Things are corrected quickly, but poorly reconfigured. Information accumulates, but is not integrated. And then the system begins to appear highly active and highly managerial, even though it has in fact lost the capacity for deep reading. At that point, the organization tends to become dependent on short-term solutions, on individual figures who absorb too much, and on a culture in which the repetition of problems is normalized as an inevitable part of the business.

6.3. Impulse and Return: How Decision, Information, and Correction Circulate

The system’s internal circulation can be understood as a dynamic of impulse and return⁽⁵⁵⁾. Impulse refers to what sets organizational movement in motion: a priority, a strategic decision, a staffing need, an objective, an alert, contextual pressure, or a relevant correction. Return refers to everything the system sends back from its material, operational, intermediate, and cross-functional layers: results, resistances, distortions, hidden costs, improvised adjustments, wear, bottlenecks, or signs of saturation.

In a less mature company, the impulse exists, but the return degrades. Decisions travel downward,

(54) Ocasio (1997) develops an attention-based view of the firm and places the selection of priorities and interpretations at the core of corporate governance. Ocasio, W. (1997). *Towards an attention-based view of the firm*. *Strategic Management Journal*, 18(S1), 187–206.

(55) Daft and Lengel (1986) analyze the organization’s information-processing requirements and show that the quality of feedback flow conditions coordination, correction, and structural design. Daft, R. L., & Lengel, R. H. (1986). *Organizational information requirements, media richness and structural design*. *Management Science*, 32(5), 554–571.

but the experience that comes back upward arrives filtered, softened, or too late. Data rises without context. Incidents are reported as noise. Real warnings are privatized or silenced through fatigue. Intermediate layers, saturated or cautious, absorb too much in order not to unsettle the system. And the result is a center that continues to act on the basis of a partial image of the field.

In a more coherent company, by contrast, return is not interpreted as a nuisance, but as an essential part of governance. This does not mean romantic horizontalism or operational assemblyism. It means something more sober: that the system takes seriously the quality of the information that comes back, the traceability of the route it has followed, and the conditions under which that information has been generated. An organization capable of receiving return without automatically penalizing whoever expresses it can correct earlier, redistribute better, and prevent the base from indefinitely absorbing what should have been treated as a design problem.

Correction, therefore, should not be conceived as an isolated act detached from this circulation. Genuine correction means intervening in the route between impulse and return: seeing where priority becomes distorted, where traceability is lost, where one layer absorbs too much, and where the system has ceased to hear what it no longer knows how to hear explicitly.

6.4. Reintegration, Resynchronization, and Cycle Closure

A mature corporate structure needs not only the capacity to move, but also the capacity to close cycles. This is decisive. Many organizations activate, demand, correct, and redistribute, but do not reintegrate. They leave tasks open, time uncompensated, conflicts unreworke, learning unfixed, and exceptions unrevised. From the outside, the system may appear to advance. From the inside, what accumulates is debt⁽⁵⁶⁾: cognitive, temporal, relational, and institutional.

To reintegrate means to close without erasing. It means taking what has occurred, recognizing its impact, restoring form to it, and resynchronizing layers that had been operating at incompatible rhythms. In a company, resynchronization may take many forms: periodic review of patterns, clear feedback on decisions, recalibration of coverage, updating of criteria, documentation that turns a case into learning, or cross-functional intervention that prevents the same tension from continuing to reappear under different disguises.

Without this capacity for reintegration, the system lives in a condition of discontinuous accumulation. Each day appears new, but drags remnants of the previous one. Each incident is resolved locally, but leaves no institutional intelligence behind. Each overexertion is absorbed, but not returned in the form of redesign. Cycle closure, then, is not an administrative matter; it is a deep function of organizational health. Where it exists, the system can remain demanding without becoming trapped in the blind repetition of what has not been worked through.

(56) Fiol and Lyles (1985) distinguish between apparent change and organizational learning, and place the incorporation of learning into routines and frameworks as a condition for real improvement. Fiol, C. M., & Lyles, M. A. (1985). *Organizational learning. Academy of Management Review*, 10(4), 803–813.

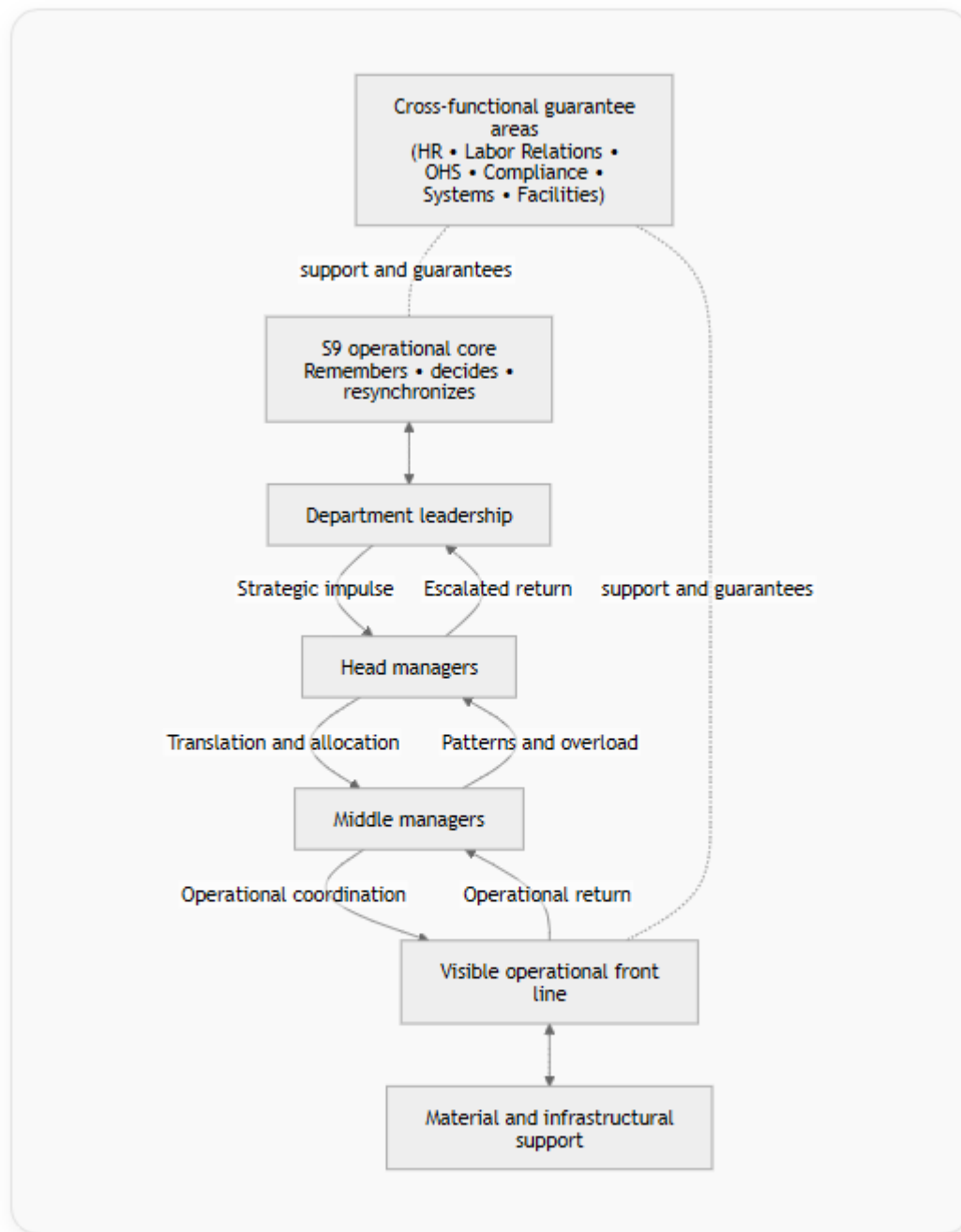


Figure 2. Internal dynamics of the corporate structure: impulse, return, and resynchronization across organizational levels.

Note. For visual economy, cross-functional guarantee areas are anchored to the operational core and the operational field, although their function extends across all levels of the organization.

6.5. Coherence, Plasticity, and Evolution Without Collapse

A coherent organization is not an immobile one. If it were, it would become incapable of responding to variations in its environment, to changes in demand, or to legitimate internal

transformations. Coherence requires plasticity⁽⁵⁷⁾. But plasticity, in turn, is valuable only if it does not result in a loss of form. That is why a healthy company must combine three qualities at once: coherence, plasticity, and evolution without collapse.

Coherence provides direction and economy of form. Plasticity provides adjustment, learning capacity, and room for reorganization. Evolution without collapse appears when the system manages to change without destroying what makes its continuity possible. The balance among these three dimensions is fragile. Too much rigidity produces asphyxiation, fear of error, and saturation of the same support points. Too much plasticity without a center produces arbitrariness, change fatigue, and loss of legibility. Too much evolution without care for the base produces extractive growth: expansion at the expense of the layers that sustain the system but do not truly participate in its improvement.

In practice, this triad is played out in highly concrete decisions: how shifts are redesigned, how new areas are integrated, how a tool is adapted to complex environments, how time is revised, how rights are absorbed without displacing guilt laterally, and how improvement in one zone is prevented from degrading another. A company that evolves well is not the one that changes most quickly, but the one that changes with less residual noise, more useful memory, and lower hidden cost for those who sustain the container and the operation.

6.6. What Happens When One or Several Functions Become Overly Dominant

No function is problematic in itself. The problem emerges when one or several acquire disproportionate weight and force the rest of the system to organize itself around that excess. A company may overdevelop its framework of guarantees to the point that protection turns into unproductive rigidity. It may overvalue adaptation until it lives in continuous change. It may hypertrophy volume management until habitability, memory, or redistribution become secondary. It may overactivate external projection to the point of impoverishing internal truth. Or it may turn the operational core into a center of excessive control, eliminating real return and generating obedience without learning.

Functional excesses often initially resemble efficiency. Very high volume may look like competitiveness. Constant adaptation may look like agility. Strong centralization may look like order. A highly affirmed culture may look like alignment. But when one function dominates too much, what happens is that the others bend around it or begin to degrade. And then the system loses functional variety⁽⁵⁸⁾ — that is, it loses internal resources for correcting itself in a rich way.

This helps explain why some companies generate very similar problems even when their key people change. It is not necessarily a sum of poor profiles; it is a configuration in which certain functions have gained so much weight that everything else becomes subsidiary. The useful question then ceases to be “who is failing?” and becomes “which function has hypertrophied, and which others has it left without oxygen?” From that point, intervention is no longer framed as the moral

(57) March (1991) formulates the tension between exploration and exploitation and shows that organizational adaptation requires balancing learning, stability, and renewal. March, J. G. (1991). *Exploration and exploitation in organizational learning*. *Organization Science*, 2(1), 71–87.

(58) Ashby (1956) formulates the law of requisite variety and argues that a system can regulate the complexity it faces only if it preserves sufficient internal variety. Ashby, W. R. (1956). *An Introduction to Cybernetics*. London: Chapman & Hall.

adjustment of isolated behaviors, but as the redistribution of structural weight⁽⁵⁹⁾.

6.7. Organizational Fragility, Structural Noise, and Loss of Integrity

Organizational fragility does not always manifest as open crisis. It often appears as structural noise: instructions that overlap, decisions that correct one another, parallel channels, information that rises in distorted form, time that never fully closes, guarantees that exist but do not reach everyone equally, fatigue distributed unevenly, silences that resemble calm, and above all a sense that the system requires too much invisible effort in order to keep appearing normal.

Structural noise is an early sign of loss of integrity. It does not merely indicate that “things are tense,” but that the organization has begun to spend too much energy compensating for incoherences it ought to be resolving more cleanly. Where noise grows, the capacity for discernment weakens: it becomes harder to know what is urgent and what is important, what is an incident and what is a pattern, what is reaction and what is a deep signal of the system. That is why a very noisy company is not merely a tired company; it is a less lucid one.

Loss of integrity arrives when this noise ceases to be perceived as a signal and becomes a normal condition. Then people stop expecting real correction, teams adapt their conduct to disorder, middle managers absorb more than they should, upper levels receive an increasingly sanitized version of reality, and the guarantee areas end up operating on the visible portion of a problem whose real structure is circulating elsewhere. At that point, the main risk is not only immediate damage. It is that the company may cease to be capable of representing itself with enough fidelity⁽⁶⁰⁾ to correct itself.

And that is precisely the central issue of this chapter: a corporate structure depends not only on which functions it affirms, but on how it allows them to interact. When that interaction loses its capacity for return, closure, and redistribution, the system may remain standing, yes, but increasingly on the basis of noise, unequal absorption, and the gradual loss of integrity. What is truly organizational begins there: where the company decides whether it will continue functioning in that way, or whether it will finally become a system capable of listening to itself before it has to break.

(59) Taleb (2012) describes fragile systems as those that accumulate vulnerability and deteriorate precisely under disturbance, volatility, and disorder. Taleb, N. N. (2012). *Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder*. New York, NY: Random House.

(60) Reason (1990) shows that many organizational failures arise from latent conditions and incomplete representations of the system, not only from visible errors on the front line. Reason, J. (1990). *Human Error*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

7. Operational translation of the model into concrete corporate policies

If the previous chapters have served to define a coherent corporate architecture and to describe its internal dynamics, this chapter takes a further step: it translates that structural logic into a set of concrete organizational policies. The starting point is simple, but demanding. An institutional architecture proves its value only when it can become a practical criterion of design, a guide for decision-making, and a set of verifiable measures that alter the system's real functioning. Otherwise, theory runs the risk of becoming elegant language with no effect on the distribution of time, power, voice, or cost.

The central question here is not only what a company should do, but how it must organize it so that it does not remain on paper. Many organizations already possess enough rules, protocols, and tools to declare certain problems solved. The problem appears when those instruments do not penetrate all levels in the same way, do not reach the zones of greatest compression, or are designed from a logic of formal compliance rather than structural correction. This chapter therefore begins from a basic methodological premise: every relevant organizational policy must be formulated in such a way that it can be tested by its real effects, not merely by its administrative presence.

7.1. Material Habitability of the System: Cleaning, Maintenance, Physical Support, and Foundational Continuity

The first concrete corporate policy must concern the material habitability of the system. This means recognizing that cleaning, maintenance, technical-material support, facilities, physical safety, ergonomics⁽⁶¹⁾, environmental quality, and the availability of means do not constitute a logistical periphery, but a central dimension of operability. A company that subordinates this base to a purely reactive logic—intervening only when something has already deteriorated enough to affect the business visibly—is operating from a form of institutional blindness: it treats as secondary what in fact conditions everyone else's work.

A serious policy in this area should include, at a minimum, four principles:

First. Explicit recognition of material support as the system's basal layer rather than a minor service.

Second. A clear combination of preventive and corrective maintenance, with sufficient traceability of incidents, response times, and prioritization criteria.

Third. The inclusion of support staff in information and review circuits, so that they are not reduced to silent execution.

Fourth. An understanding of habitability as a matter of organizational continuity rather than mere image.

(61) Dul and Neumann (2009) study the contribution of ergonomics to company strategy and organizational performance. Dul, J., & Neumann, W. P. (2009). *Ergonomics contributions to company strategies. Applied Ergonomics*, 40(4), 745–752.

A company that cares for its container only when it visibly affects external reputation is still thinking about the problem incorrectly.

The verifiability of this policy depends on whether the system truly improves its capacity to anticipate deterioration, whether resolution times cease to depend on chance or on individual insistence, and whether the material layer stops being treated as external to the organizational phenomenon. Wherever cleaning, maintenance, and physical support appear only when they fail, the most likely explanation is that the system still has not recognized that its real base begins not with the first visible business role, but earlier.

7.2. Time and Operational Rest

Time is one of the most sensitive places where an organization reveals its coherence or its lack of it. To speak of operational rest does not mean introducing a logic of indulgence into demanding contexts, but recognizing that a human system cannot sustain attention, judgment, and quality if all its design is oriented toward extracting continuity without adequately absorbing the costs of that demand. The key issue is not only how many minutes of break formally exist, but whether the system does or does not allow effective recovery⁽⁶²⁾, cycle closure, and sufficient margins between chained demands.

A serious corporate policy on time and rest should abandon the logic of the formal minimum as a sufficient criterion. It is not enough to assign break windows if in practice they are blocked by coverage, by flow, or by a work organization that makes them unviable. Nor is it enough to permit breaks if they depend on lateral arrangements between colleagues or on a supervisor's temporary goodwill. Rest lost because of operational impossibility should be recorded as a structural incident and should not disappear as if it had never existed. Likewise, the organization should be able to identify in which time bands, work types, or areas recovery is most compromised, so as to stop treating the problem as generic and begin reading it as a localized design issue.

The signs that this policy is not merely rhetorical are concrete:

- The company stops measuring only the formal presence of breaks and begins evaluating whether they are actually usable as recovery.
- The time between tasks is no longer systematically compressed to the point of eliminating cognitive closure.
- Overtime ceases to become silent absorption.
- Temporal compression does not always fall on the same layers while others retain far greater informal elasticity.

A mature organization does not merely grant breaks; it designs its structure so that resting is not an operational anomaly.

(62) Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) develop recovery from work as a necessary process for restoring personal resources after job demands. Sonnentag, S., & Fritz, C. (2007). *The Recovery Experience Questionnaire: Development and validation of a measure for assessing recuperation and unwinding from work*. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 12(3), 204–221.

7.3. Traceability of Operational Channels

One of the most critical points in any contemporary organizational design is the traceability of the channels through which real management actually circulates. In many companies, the old corridor has been replaced by the corporate chat, the direct message, the private call, or the off-channel instruction. The problem is not the existence of informal communication, which is inevitable and sometimes useful. The problem appears when orders, corrections, changes of priority, pressures on availability, or shifts of responsibility that directly affect work circulate through those channels and yet leave no trace⁽⁶³⁾ where they should.

A coherent corporate policy must establish a sharp distinction between informal coordination and relevant operational management. Everything that affects work, time, evaluation, responsibility, or priority should be required to return to a traceable operational channel. This does not mean eliminating agility or turning every interaction into bureaucracy. It means preventing hierarchical power from acting systematically in zones of low memory, low contrast, and high vulnerability for the person receiving the instruction.

Traceability also requires more than technology. It requires a shared institutional criterion: middle managers, head managers, department leadership, and cross-functional areas must operate with a clear rule about what cannot be resolved privately. It also requires special protection for off-shift time, where the informal channel tends to expand as a covert extension of the working day. The real verification of this policy will not consist in the mere existence of official channels, but in whether important decisions, corrections, and demands actually appear in them, whether incidents can be reconstructed without depending on private versions, and whether operational pressure displaced into opaque spaces is reduced.

7.4. Actual Coverage and Staffing by Language, Time Band, and Work Type

Many organizations still size their structure on the basis of a statistical fiction: nominal headcount. Yet a company does not operate with abstract numbers, but with actual coverage. What matters is how many people are truly available in each time band, with what scheduling constraints, for which language, with what level of case complexity, with how much lateral support, and under what flow intensity. Ignoring this leads to a very common design error: believing the system is reasonably covered because the organizational chart seems to say so, even though daily experience shows otherwise.

The appropriate policy at this point requires moving from headcount to effective capacity⁽⁶⁴⁾. That means:

- Mapping coverage by time band, language, queue, shift, and work type.
- Reviewing which profiles repeatedly absorb late closures.

(63) Leonardi (2014) formulates communication visibility and analyzes how digital traces make it possible to reconstruct coordination, exchange, and organizational work. Leonardi, P. M. (2014). *Social media, knowledge sharing, and innovation: Toward a theory of communication visibility*. *Information Systems Research*, 25(4), 796–816.

(64) Gans, Kooze, and Mandelbaum (2003) synthesize the functioning of call centers and frame real operational capacity as a problem of coverage, variability, and staffing. Gans, N., Kooze, G., & Mandelbaum, A. (2003). *Telephone call centers: Tutorial, review, and research prospects*. *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*, 5(2), 79–141.

- Observing where temporal compression concentrates.

- Analyzing recurrences before attributing them to personal shortcomings. A company that continues to read as a “problem of certain people” what are in fact patterns of undercoverage is converting a structural signal into an organizational bias.

The practical translation of this policy requires tools for periodic review, not merely a one-off snapshot. Coverage changes because of vacations, reduced schedules, work-life arrangements, sick leave, redistributions, and partial adjustments. The system must be able to recognize when that variation has ceased to be a contingency and has become the new structure.

The proof that this policy works appears when recurrences that were always localized in the same points begin to decrease, when reinforcement decisions cease to be blind, and when middle managers no longer have to compensate with daily inventiveness for what should have been better calculated in the design.

7.5. Managing End-of-Shift Work and Actual Overtime

Few things show so clearly the difference between real work and officially recognized time as the end of a shift. In many operational environments, the schedule ends on paper, but not in practice. This may take the form of calls that enter at the last minute, tasks that cannot be closed in a second, work carried over from the previous contact, or demands that oblige people to extend their presence without that extension being automatically integrated into the official compensation circuit. When this happens habitually, the company is not merely working with overtime; it is working with uncertain overtime⁽⁶⁵⁾, dependent on the record, the manager, or simple forgetfulness.

A serious policy in this area must begin from a simple rule: if extra work exists in the operational systems, it must be capable of being translated cleanly into the formal system that recognizes, compensates, or redistributes it. It cannot be relegated to a supervisor’s goodwill or to the worker’s ability to remember it, claim it, or prove it again and again. Moreover, the form of recovery cannot become trapped once more in the same bottleneck that generated the excess. If time payback is scheduled only at the beginning or end of a shift but disappears again because of new calls or new demands, the organization is not compensating; it is postponing the debt.

The practical verification of this policy requires checking whether overtime is automatically integrated when sufficient technical trace exists, whether managerial discretion in its recognition decreases, whether recovery ceases to depend on the luck of the flow, and whether recurrences are reviewed by work type, language, and time band so as to correct the origin and not merely the consequence.

The objective is not to create privileges, but to eliminate one of the most common forms of invisible wear: working longer without a stable guarantee that this time will count in the same way as officially monitored time.

(65) van der Hulst (2003) reviews the evidence on long working hours and their effects on health and functioning. van der Hulst, M. (2003). *Long workhours and health. Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*, 29(3), 171–188.

7.6. Work–Life Balance, Reduced Working Hours, and the Structural Absorption of Rights

One of the points at which a company's maturity can best be measured is its capacity to absorb rights without turning them into lateral conflict⁽⁶⁶⁾. Work–life balance measures, reduced working hours, and adjustments related to care or life circumstances should not be treated as problematic privileges or as anomalies that the team must somehow absorb on its own. The problem does not lie in those rights; it lies in the fact that organizations too often fail to redesign coverage, shifts, and workload distribution sufficiently to integrate them without internal fracture.

A coherent policy here must start from a clear premise: rights cannot function as morally charged quotas or as invisible loads redistributed onto the same people over and over again. This forces the separation of two planes that are often confused: the recognition of the right and the organization's capacity to absorb it. A mature company does not resolve that tension by systematically denying or delaying requests, nor by allowing the team to experience each concession as an implicit grievance. What it should do is review structurally what redesign each concession requires and what additional resources or redistributions are needed so that the right does not become silent conflict among colleagues.

The proof that this policy works lies not only in the existence of request procedures, but in whether the guilt felt by the person who receives a legitimate adjustment decreases, whether the sense of a scarce quota is reduced, whether unbalanced shifts stop becoming chronic as an informal solution, and whether the organization can explain transparently why a measure is integrated, rearranged, or requires additional support.

The goal is not to erase the real difficulty of reconciling coverage with rights, but to prevent the system from transferring that difficulty into lateral rivalry or covert punishment.

7.7. Equity Across Areas and the End of the Two-Speed Company

One of the most corrosive effects of many corporate structures is the emergence of a two-speed company. Not necessarily because some people work little and others a great deal, but because some areas operate with greater informal elasticity of time, voice, and protection, while others live under the stopwatch, under exposure, or under a more rigid regime of one-sided traceability. Inequality arises not only from the functional difference between areas, which may be legitimate, but from the fact that those differences end up conveying that time, dignity, or even the capacity to breathe are worth different things depending on one's place in the whole.

A policy of equity across areas does not seek to homogenize everything. It seeks something more precise: to review whether the organization is distributing margin for recovery, access to common tools, protection against arbitrariness, and the capacity for extra time or exceptional load to count in an equivalent way. When certain layers enjoy corporate systems for recording, accumulating, and returning time, while others are left at the mercy of opaque local management, the company ceases to be one. It becomes a structure split between fully institutionalized zones and zones administered

(66) Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) describe work–family conflict as the incompatibility between role demands in different domains of life. Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). *Sources of conflict between work and family roles*. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(1), 76–88.

as a permanent exception⁽⁶⁷⁾.

Correcting this fracture requires comparing areas not only by productivity, but by their actual regime of time, traceability, access to organization, and institutional protection. Only in that way can one assess whether functional differences respond to legitimate need or conceal hierarchies of organizational dignity. The company ceases to operate at two speeds when the design recognizes differential complexity without turning it into a stable asymmetry of rights, voice, or the capacity to rest.

7.8. Protection of Voice and Real Access to the Organization

A coherent structure cannot depend solely on the voice of those who already have natural access to meetings, synthesis spaces, or proximity to leadership. Organizational voice must also be able to circulate from the time bands, shifts, teams, and layers that sustain the system with less visibility. This is especially important in contexts where certain people remain fixed for long periods in schedules or positions with very little cross-functional contact. In such cases, the problem is not only one of schedule; it is one of real access to the organization.

Protecting voice means more than opening a suggestion channel. It means ensuring that relevant information does not have to rise only through hierarchical filters that, out of prudence, fear, overload, or political interest, soften or neutralize it. It means creating mechanisms through which the experience of the front line, the evening shift, the material layer, or the overloaded manager can become an organizational signal⁽⁶⁸⁾ without immediately being reduced to a complaint, a local incident, or a problem of attitude.

The verification of this policy depends on whether the least visible time bands actually participate in learning circuits, whether there are pathways through which information reaches higher levels with less mediation, whether teams perceive that raising an issue serves some purpose beyond exposing themselves, and whether leadership receives sufficiently faithful versions of what happens at the edges of the system. An organization loses quality when it only listens well to those who are already close to its narrative center.

7.9. Operational Support, Micro-Networks, and Minimum Dignity

Operational support should not be confused with paternalism or with diffuse emotional rescue. In demanding contexts, supporting means building a minimum infrastructure of cross-checking, protection, and non-isolation. A person or a team needs to be able to leave, at least partially, the regime of “this only happens to me” and enter a framework in which what is happening can be cross-checked, recorded, and treated as a shareable fact. Without that minimum network, the system encourages the burden to be internalized as exaggeration, fragility, or individual incapacity.

A corporate policy of operational support should allow healthy micro-networks: the presence of a witness in sensitive meetings, shared review of certain written communications, basic peer cross-checking, or bounded accompaniment functions that do not replace the agency of the person experiencing the problem. It should also make clear that supporting is not about becoming a new

(67) Doeringer and Piore (1971) develop the concept of the internal labor market and describe enduring segmentations among groups and career paths within the same company. Doeringer, P. B., & Piore, M. J. (1971). *Internal Labor Markets and Manpower Analysis*. Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath.

(68) Detert and Burris (2007) study employee voice and the conditions under which concerns and problems rise upward or remain blocked within the organization. Detert, J. R., & Burris, E. R. (2007). *Leadership behavior and employee voice: Is the door really open?* *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(4), 869–884.

informal container for harm, but about reinforcing structure: helping something be properly framed, properly recorded, properly escalated, and properly sustained within the institutional framework.

Minimum dignity is at stake here in a very concrete way. A mature company does not leave the base, the middle manager, or the material layer entirely alone in the face of structural tensions it knows to be recurrent. Nor does it turn support into a matter of favor or personal affinity. It integrates it into the design itself. The proof lies in whether people can ask for presence, cross-checking, or concrete help without having to dramatize the problem in order to be taken seriously.

7.10. Climate Sensing, Prosody, and the Early Detection of Incoherence

Organizations usually measure well what they have already decided counts, but poorly what reveals their incoherences before these become explicit. That is why a finer climate-sensing capacity is needed. This is not only a matter of general surveys, but of the institution's ability to detect early signals: systematic interruptions, shifts in tone⁽⁶⁹⁾, silences after certain interventions, disproportionate concentration of speech, recurrent spikes of tension in certain teams, growing use of private channels to manage pressure, or declining participation in spaces where people previously did speak.

Prosody enters here not as an exotic element, but as a material dimension of power and climate. The way something is said is part of the operational environment. A meeting may produce impeccable minutes while at the same time having generated silencing, soft intimidation, or an unequal distribution of legitimacy. Ignoring this is to grant too much intelligence to explicit content and far too little to the form that makes it effective or destructive. A serious policy should incorporate observation of interaction patterns, not in order to monitor individuals punitively, but in order to detect early those zones where the system has already begun to degrade its own capacity for healthy relation.

The verification of this policy does not require excessive technification from the outset. It may begin with qualitative logs, cross-reviews, internal audits of interaction, or analysis of meeting and channel patterns. What matters is that the company stop treating climate as something vaporous and begin treating it as a structural dimension with observable signals. When that happens, the organization gains the capacity to intervene before harm becomes encapsulated in personal conflict or resigned silence.

7.11. A Minimally Verifiable Procedure Against Opacity and Capture

No organizational architecture can sustain itself without a minimally verifiable procedure that acts as a safeguard against opacity, local capture of process, or the arbitrary displacement of a problem. This procedure does not need to be maximalist, nor should it paralyze operations. It must be clear enough so that, when a structural incident, a relevant conflict, a suspected abuse of channel, a persistent inequality, or a pattern of saturation appears, there is a minimum shared and

(69) Gumperz (1982) develops the notion of contextualization cues and shows how tone, rhythm, and pauses guide inferences about frame and intention beyond lexical content. Gumperz, J. J. (1982). *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

reconstructable pathway⁽⁷⁰⁾.

At a minimum, that procedure should include:

- The formal opening of the case or incident, with a date and responsible parties.
- A clear definition of the object under review.
- The basic preservation of relevant traceability.
- The temporary neutralization of undue influences when necessary.
- Review from more than one perspective when the problem compromises several levels.
- A reasoned account of what was observed.
- Follow-up on whether the correction changed anything or merely brought the episode to a narrative close.

The underlying logic is very simple: the procedure should not serve to suffocate reality in the name of order, but to make it treatable without depending on informal power.

The difference between a company with procedure and a company with a verifiable procedure lies in the fruit.

- **In the first**, the case “enters” the system.
- **In the second**, the system actually changes the way it sees, handles, and returns it. What is verifiable is recognized because it leaves less room for local capture, because it better protects those who participate, and because it makes it possible to reconstruct what was done, what was not done, and with what consequences. Wherever a procedure exists but leaves no such trace, the most likely explanation is that it continues to function as a container without source: an administrative form without real corrective capacity.

(70) Folger and Cropanzano (1998) develop organizational justice as applied to people management and place procedure at the center of institutional legitimacy. Folger, R., & Cropanzano, R. (1998). *Organizational Justice and Human Resource Management*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

8. Design of roles and responsibilities by organizational level

This chapter clarifies the function each level fulfills within a coherent corporate structure. The aim is not to distribute dignity in the form of a moral staircase or to impose a rigid vision of the company, but to identify what each layer contributes to the whole, what kind of responsibility properly belongs to it, and what begins to degrade when it is required to sustain tasks that do not structurally belong to it. An organization does not break down only because one layer fails; it also breaks down when one layer chronically assumes functions that the design has not distributed well. For that reason, speaking of roles and responsibilities does not mean merely assigning work; it means ordering the system so that it does not depend on silent absorption, excessive filtering, or asymmetric overloads. This reading is consistent with a relational and multilevel understanding of the organization, in which each level sustains something, translates something, regulates something, and at the same time receives conditions of possibility and limits from other levels.

For methodological purposes, this chapter begins from an important premise: organizational levels are not simply hierarchical positions, but functional locations⁽⁷¹⁾ within the system. This means that, in smaller structures, the same person may partially embody more than one role, or that, in larger organizations, the same function may be distributed across several posts. What matters is not only the job title, but the structural function actually performed within the whole. From that perspective, the company is analyzed here through six layers:

- 1.- Material and infrastructural support.**
- 2.- The visible operational front line.**
- 3.- Middle managers.**
- 4.- Head managers.**
- 5.- Department directors.**
- 6.- The cross-functional areas of guarantee and support.**

The coherence of the system depends less on whether each of these layers exists nominally than on whether each can perform its function without having chronically to compensate for what properly belongs to another.

8.1. The Function of Material and Infrastructural Support Staff

The material and infrastructural support layer fulfills the most basal function in the system: making the organization habitable, safe, maintainable, and operable. This includes cleaning, maintenance, gardening, technical-material support, replenishment, facilities, and equivalent functions. Their work does not decorate the container; it keeps it usable. For that reason, their

(71) Katz and Kahn (1966) describe organizations as systems of interdependent roles in which function matters more than mere formal position. Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1966). *The Social Psychology of Organizations*. New York, NY: Wiley.

function should not be understood as a service external to the organizational phenomenon, but as one of its constitutive conditions. Where this layer fails or is disregarded, the rest of the system begins to operate against a background of physical noise, environmental deterioration, loss of material continuity, and increased basal friction.

This layer also fulfills a second function that is less visible, but deeply important: it acts as an early sensor of degradation⁽⁷²⁾. Those who sustain the infrastructure are often the first to detect when the environment is becoming less hospitable, when an incident is beginning to recur, when pressure is leading to the deterioration of spaces or materials, or when the system is sacrificing preventive maintenance to continuous urgency. In other words, they do not merely sustain; they also perceive. Ignoring this dimension impoverishes organizational intelligence and reinforces a classic bias: treating as a mere service what is in fact part of the system's material basis.

Its structural responsibility should include, at a minimum, the material continuity of the container, the detection and reporting of relevant forms of deterioration, participation in circuits where the physical environment is recognized as an operational variable, and the possibility of being heard without being left outside the institutional narrative. A mature organization does not render this layer invisible or summon it only once something has already failed. It integrates it as part of its basal architecture, because it knows that habitability is not a secondary consequence of the business, but one of its first conditions.

8.2. The Function of the Visible Operational Front Line

The visible operational front line fulfills the function of direct contact between the system and its actual demand. It is there that organizational architecture becomes lived and effective experience⁽⁷³⁾: service, sales, support, resolution, interaction, and the direct execution of the work. For that reason, this layer does not merely work; it also reveals. It is the place where the virtues and defects of design become visible: time well or badly distributed, clear or opaque channels, sufficient or insufficient coverage, and demands either properly calibrated or sustained through silent absorption.

In this sense, the front line is a layer of immediate operational truth. Not because it possesses the whole picture, but because it receives before anyone else the concrete impact of decisions, design deficits, and pressure from the environment. It is there that one sees whether a policy exists in reality or only on paper; whether a tool integrates or excludes; whether rest is real or merely formal; whether traceability protects, or whether workload is always unloaded onto the same bodies and times. When the organization does not know how to listen to this layer, it loses one of its main mechanisms for checking itself against reality.

The responsibility of the front line should not be to absorb the system's incoherences indefinitely. Its function is to operate, inform, signal recurrences, close work with quality, and participate, insofar as appropriate, in improving the real flow of work. To do so, it needs more than instructions: it needs margins for closure, minimal traceability, protection against arbitrariness, access to operational support, and the ability to raise patterns without every critical signal being immediately translated

(72) Hollnagel, Woods, and Leveson (2006) bring together the principles of resilience engineering and place the early detection of variation and weak signals at the center of organizational safety. Hollnagel, E., Woods, D. D., & Leveson, N. (Eds.). (2006). *Resilience Engineering: Concepts and Precepts*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.

(73) Hochschild (1983) analyzes service work as a space in which the organization becomes direct experience for both the recipient of the interaction and the person who performs it. Hochschild, A. R. (1983). *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

into a problem of attitude or personal adaptation. A mature company does not use the front line as a universal sink for ambiguity. It treats it as a critical layer of observation and reality.

8.3. The Function of Middle Managers

Middle managers fulfill a function of translation⁽⁷⁴⁾, coordination, and local containment. They are the layer that turns the general framework into daily rhythm, distributes workload in real time, detects local saturation, accompanies the team in concrete operations, and translates upward what, below, still appears as dispersed incident. Their position is delicate because they are exposed to a double pressure: maintaining service continuity and facing the direct experience of operational wear.

When this level functions well, it acts as a hinge. It does not merely distribute tasks; it turns recurrences into readable patterns, preserves a degree of humanity without breaking continuity, prevents daily regulation from depending solely on the panic of the moment, and offers a minimum of proximate direction that gives shape to the work. It also fulfills a function of intelligent buffering: not every disturbance should be escalated, but neither should every disturbance be absorbed locally until it disappears. The quality of middle management depends, to a large extent, on its capacity to distinguish between what can be resolved tactically and what is already signaling a structural problem.

The great risk at this level appears when it becomes a chronic silent buffer. At that point, it stops translating and starts compensating. It covers structural gaps, manages lateral tensions that did not originate at its level, absorbs frustration without being able to correct the source, and ends up producing a deceptive image of stability: the system seems to be holding, but it is holding only because someone has become its permanent buffer. For that reason, a coherent architecture cannot limit itself to asking this level for “good leadership.” It must give it real room to maneuver, clear criteria, the ability to record patterns, and sufficient backing so that it does not constantly have to choose between caring for the team and masking the fragility of the design.

8.4. The Function of Head Managers

Head managers fulfill a function of pattern-reading, prioritization, and second-order vertical translation. They are no longer as close to micro-operations as middle managers, but they are still close enough to decide whether what recurs below will be read as local noise or as a structural problem. A crucial responsibility falls to them: to turn the accumulation of incidents into organizational criterion⁽⁷⁵⁾, or to neutralize that accumulation under the appearance of operational normality.

Their role is not merely to “manage better” what they receive, but to sustain a position of structural fidelity between layers. This implies several things: comparing patterns across teams, detecting coverage biases, recognizing when a recurrence is no longer a case, reviewing whether the system is loading too much onto certain profiles, and escalating information without emptying it out in order to protect apparent stability. Where this layer operates with structural lucidity, the company gains the capacity to anticipate. Where it operates in an overly political or overly sanitized way, the company loses real return, and the center begins to govern on the basis of too clean an image of

(74) Floyd and Wooldridge (1997) study the strategic influence of middle management and describe its role in translation and articulation between organizational levels. Floyd, S. W., & Wooldridge, B. (1997). *Middle management's strategic influence and organizational performance*. *Journal of Management Studies*, 34(3), 465–485.

(75) Dutton and Ashford (1993) study issue selling and show how operational problems reach top management through processes of escalation, framing, and prioritization. Dutton, J. E., & Ashford, S. J. (1993). *Selling issues to top management*. *Academy of Management Review*, 18(3), 397–428.

itself.

The most common error at this level is to buffer too much. Not always out of bad faith, but out of fear of creating disorder, KPI pressure, managerial habit, or the belief that “if it is holding, then it cannot be that serious.” That logic is costly. It turns head managers into filters that lower the volume of the symptom, but also reduce the possibility of redesigning in time. For that reason, their structural responsibility is not merely to preserve consistency, but to ensure that higher levels receive enough truth not to confuse continuity with health.

8.5. The Function of Department Directors

Department directors fulfill a function of structural governance⁽⁷⁶⁾, priority reallocation, and preservation of the area’s integrity. They are not there to resolve micro-operations or mediate every concrete incident, but to define frameworks, redistribute resources, order tensions across levels, correct persistent asymmetries, and ensure that the department is not sustained through structurally invisible sacrifices. Their primary responsibility is not only to deliver results, but to do so without degrading the whole that makes those results possible.

This requires a form of leadership different from simple management by aggregates. High-level indicators are necessary, but not sufficient. A director also needs access to signals of internal inequality, recurrent saturation, channel opacity, fractures between shifts, or the exclusion of certain layers from real listening circuits. Otherwise, there is a risk of leading on the basis of a sanitized version of the area, in which what arrives has already been translated, buffered, or filtered to the point of losing much of its corrective power.

Department leadership also bears a responsibility for institutional symmetry. It must ensure that rights, traceability, time, and the capacity for voice are not distributed so unevenly that the department splits into fully institutionalized areas and areas of exception. It must also ensure that the area’s operational core remembers, reviews, and resynchronizes, rather than merely reacting. A mature director does not use complexity as an excuse for leaving certain matters outside the common system. They treat it as a sign that design must be improved precisely there.

8.6. The Function of Human Resources, Labor Relations, Occupational Health and Safety, Compliance, Systems, and Facilities

Cross-functional areas fulfill the function of a structural framework of guarantees⁽⁷⁷⁾, formalization, support, and institutional stabilization. They are neither above the organizational phenomenon nor outside it; they are part of the way the company protects itself from itself when operations come under strain. Human Resources, Labor Relations, Occupational Health and Safety, Compliance, Systems, Facilities, and other equivalent structures should not act as bureaucratic layers superimposed on reality, but as parts that make it possible for what matters to leave a trace, for rights not to depend exclusively on the local manager, and for complexity not to end up producing zones of low institutional protection.

(76) Chandler (1962) shows how corporate structure is reconfigured around decisions of priority, resources, and coordination. Chandler, A. D. Jr. (1962). *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the Industrial Enterprise*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

(77) Power (1997) analyzes the expansion of audit, verification, and formalization as part of the institutional framework of control and guarantees. Power, M. (1997). *The Audit Society: Rituals of Verification*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Each of these areas participates in a specific way. Human Resources and Labor Relations help order part of the contractual and relational container; Occupational Health and Safety protects against forms of deterioration and risk that should never be normalized; Compliance helps ensure that authority does not become completely detached from its own framework; Systems sustains the technical architecture that makes traceability, access, and memory possible; Facilities articulates and coordinates the system's material and infrastructural dimension. Their shared function is to prevent the organization from being completely captured by its own operational urgency.

The problem appears when these areas are designed for the company's comfortable average and not for its zones of greatest complexity. Protection then exists, yes, but unevenly. Procedures are valid for almost everyone except precisely where they would be most needed. Tools track some kinds of time well and others poorly. Common systems integrate the office departments while leaving out the spaces under the greatest compression. A coherent architecture requires these areas not merely to administer the formal container, but to make sure that that container actually touches operations precisely where the system's integrity is most at stake.

8.7. What Should Not Structurally Fall on Each Layer

Just as important as defining the function of each level is defining what should not structurally fall upon it. Where that boundary is absent, the company tends to shift costs downward⁽⁷⁸⁾, toward the edges, or toward the layers with the least symbolic capacity to defend themselves.

Material and infrastructural support should not have to bear functional invisibility, nor the logic of intervening only when deterioration has already become evident. Nor should this layer have to carry the hierarchical contempt of those who confuse narrative centrality with structural centrality. An organization that treats this level as mere logistical residue degrades its own reality principle.

The visible operational front line should not have to bear the chronic absorption of ambiguity, uncertain overtime, coverage failures, poor systems integration, or informal pressure channeled through opaque routes. Nor should it be made to manage, at a moral level, internal inequalities that the organization has failed to resolve by design.

Middle managers should not have to sustain, through permanent patchwork, what has already become a structural problem. They should not be the chronic administrators of exceptions or the silent judges in conflicts between rights and coverage. Still less should they carry the responsibility of producing stability by concealing the system's fragility.

Head managers should not have to meet an implicit expectation of sanitizing reality in order to protect indicators or avoid political noise. Their function is not to deactivate the truth of operations, but to translate it with sufficient density for the organization to act with criterion.

Department directors should not rely on a reading built only on aggregates, nor on total dependence on the filter coming up from below. Nor should it be considered legitimate for them to delegate indefinitely downward the correction of problems that have already proven structural.

And the cross-functional areas should not operate with a merely formal conception of their role.

(78) Herd and Moynihan (2018) develop the concept of administrative burden and show how the costs of procedures may be shifted onto those with the least room for self-protection. Herd, P., & Moynihan, D. P. (2018). *Administrative Burden: Policymaking by Other Means*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

They should not limit themselves to guarding procedure if procedure does not reach the system's most demanding zones. Their function is not to certify documentary existence, but to ensure effective institutional protection.

8.8. How to Avoid Unjust Shifts of Cost Between Levels

A mature organization does not eliminate all the costs of operating; what it can and must do is prevent those costs from being shifted again and again onto the same layers without visibility, traceability, or clear legitimacy. Preventing unjust shifts of cost is, at bottom, a form of structural justice. It means recognizing that pressure, urgency, complexity, and variability are real, but that they cannot continue to be resolved through a tacit pact in which the base absorbs, middle managers buffer, mid-level leadership filters, senior leadership decides on the basis of an already softened image, and the cross-functional areas formalize afterward what they failed to address in time.

- The first principle for preventing such shifts is visibility. A cost that is neither redistributed, nor recognized, nor recorded tends to become naturalized⁽⁷⁹⁾. For that reason, overtime, breaks not actually taken, localized saturation, exclusion from systems, translation overload, excessive filtering, and material deterioration must leave enough trace to be read as facts of design and not as mere subjective discomfort.

- The second principle is symmetry of protection. If one level receives more demand, more exposure, or more variability, it should also receive more structural support⁽⁸⁰⁾, not less. Where the opposite occurs—more pressure with fewer tools, more control with less margin, more duty with less protection—the company generates an asymmetry that sooner or later turns into resentment, silence, or degraded quality.

- The third principle is review by pattern rather than by incident. Many unjust shifts of cost persist because each episode is treated as a separate case. When the organization groups recurrences by time band, channel, language, shift, type of work, or implicated layer, it begins to see where the same node is always bearing what the design refuses to name.

- The fourth principle is structural reciprocity. No level should be able to exert significant pressure without leaving sufficient trace, nor demand continuous adaptation without assuming the redesign that such adaptation requires. Authority is legitimized not only by position, but by the responsibility with which it returns to the system part of the cost it imposes.

- And the fifth principle is reintegration. It is not enough to detect where a cost has been shifted; it must be corrected by returning it to the level that should structurally absorb it. Sometimes that will mean redesigning coverage; sometimes integrating systems; sometimes opening channels of return; sometimes strengthening guarantees or recalibrating frameworks. What is decisive is that the system stop resolving its complexity at the expense of the same layers again and again. When it succeeds in doing so, it stops functioning through accumulated wear and begins, truly, to organize itself.

(79) Star and Strauss (1999) study the ecology of visible and invisible work and show how certain burdens remain outside recognition and record. Star, S. L., & Strauss, A. (1999). *Layers of silence, arenas of voice: The ecology of visible and invisible work*. *Computer Supported Cooperative Work*, 8(1–2), 9–30.

(80) Bakker and Demerouti (2007) formulate the job demands–resources model and show that increased demands require sufficient resources to sustain performance and health. Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). *The job demands–resources model: State of the art*. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328.

Table 1. Roles and responsibilities by organizational level in a coherent corporate structure

Organizational level	Primary structural function	What the level should sustain	What should not structurally fall on the level
Material and infrastructural support	Habitability and basal continuity	A safe, maintained, usable, and materially stable environment; early detection of degradation; continuity of the physical container	Functional invisibility; purely reactive intervention; hierarchical disregard; treatment as a dispensable periphery
Visible operational front line	Direct operational truth	Service execution, quality closure, pattern signaling, and real-time contact with demand	Chronic absorption of ambiguity; uncertain overtime; opaque-channel management; structural undercoverage
Middle managers	Translation and local coordination	Workload redistribution, proximate guidance, recurrence detection, and tactical stabilization	Permanent patching; silent buffering of structural fragility; solitary management of unresolved tensions between rights and coverage
Head managers	Pattern reading and vertical translation	Cross-team comparison, escalation of structural signals, prioritization, and fidelity of return	Sanitizing reality to protect KPIs or apparent stability; reducing recurrent patterns to local noise
Department leadership	Structural governance and reallocation	Resource redistribution, correction of asymmetries, and departmental resynchronization	Governance based only on aggregates; indefinite downward delegation of structural problems
Cross-functional guarantee areas	Framework of guarantees	Traceability, institutional protection, systems integration, procedural legitimacy, and material-support coordination	Merely formal compliance detached from the organization's most complex operational zones

Note. Levels are functional locations rather than merely formal positions; in practice, one person may partially embody more than one level, especially in smaller organizations.

9. System of measurement, audit, and verification

Any institutional architecture that aspires to correct an organization for real must answer a decisive question: how can one distinguish between genuine improvement and merely declared improvement? The contemporary company has access to ever more indicators, traces, dashboards, and control procedures; yet this abundance does not in itself guarantee a better understanding of the system. In many cases, what increases is not legibility but the quantity of container. The problem of measurement, then, is not only how much data are collected, but what form those data make visible, from which levels, with what traceability, and with what capacity to return a finer corrective criterion to the system itself.

The system of measurement proposed here does not seek to replace organizational judgment or to turn institutional complexity into a single score. Its function is more demanding and more sober: to make the system less blind to itself, so that the reading of its tensions does not depend exclusively on the loudest symptom, the dominant hierarchical filter, or the average that erases asymmetries. For the purposes of this essay, structural observation will focus on fifteen operational functions (S1–S15), organized into five triadic blocks, while S16 will be read as the maximum emergent expression of the whole, that is, as the synthetic image resulting from the degree of effective articulation among the others. The task of measurement is therefore not to “score the organization,” but to build a sufficiently rigorous basis for recognizing the system’s functional profile and the trajectories of improvement or deterioration that such a profile produces.

This measurement system rests on four principles. First, it must be multilevel: it must distinguish among the material base, the visible operational front line, middle managers, head managers, department leadership, cross-functional areas, and any other relevant substructure. Second, it must be multiform: it must combine material, temporal, relational, procedural, and outcome indicators. Third, it must be traceable: it must make it possible to reconstruct where each signal comes from, how it is coded, and how it is linked to decisions. And fourth, it must be verifiable by fruit: it must not limit itself to measuring activity or formal existence, but must observe whether the system gains clarity, reduces noise, redistributes workload better, and increases its capacity to correct itself without structural violence. In this sense, what is proposed here is not a total accounting of organizational life, but a prudent infrastructure for structural reading.

9.1. Indicators by Structural Function

The first layer of the measurement system consists in building indicators for the fifteen operational functions, while keeping visible their organization into five triadic blocks. This grouping not only respects the internal logic of the architecture; it also facilitates a more ordered reading⁽⁸¹⁾ of the system, preventing fifteen disconnected lists from obscuring what is in fact sustained through relational blocks.

In the first triadic block—habitable base, basic belonging, and container integrity—the indicators must capture whether the organization possesses a sufficient material foundation, whether entry into the system takes place without structural humiliation, and whether the

(81) Tukey (1977) proposes exploratory data analysis as a practice aimed at making patterns, asymmetries, and anomalies visible before reducing the phenomenon to a single index. Tukey, J. W. (1977). *Exploratory Data Analysis*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

institutional container truly protects against arbitrariness and degradation. Relevant measures here include the material availability of resources, the ratio between preventive and corrective maintenance, the recurrence of unresolved physical incidents, the quality of onboarding, initial access to minimally useful information, the presence of degrading or merely instrumental treatment during integration, and the degree to which relevant instructions⁽⁸²⁾ and operational decisions circulate inside or outside protected channels. This first block makes it possible to observe whether the organization provides a real foundation on which the remaining functions can rest without excessive basal noise.

In the second triadic block—dynamic balance of time, traceable institutional memory, and coherent growth—measurement must center on how the company manages time, preserves reconstructable pathways, and expands. Here, key indicators include scheduled breaks versus actually enjoyed breaks, average time between tasks, the ratio between overtime generated and overtime recognized, the reconstructive quality of institutional memory, dependence on particular individuals as “living archives,” the repetition of incidents caused by the lack of useful records, asymmetries in integration between areas when new tools or procedures are deployed, and the number of permanent exceptions left behind by apparently successful growth. This block reveals whether the organization becomes more complex with form, or whether it is gaining complexity at the cost of greater opacity and greater friction.

In the third triadic block—redistribution of tension, recognition of thresholds, and operational core—the indicators must show whether the load is concentrating, whether the system detects its own signals of fragility in time, and whether there is a functional center capable of accumulating history, reading patterns, and returning reconfiguration. Relevant measures here include the concentration of overtime, localized saturation by team, language, or time band, recurrent blockage of breaks, the speed with which a weak signal reaches a review space, the frequency with which a pattern is treated as an isolated incident, and the average time between the detection of a recurrence and a structural decision. It is also useful to measure the existence and quality of stable review spaces, the follow-up given to corrective decisions, and the center’s ability to redistribute resources rather than merely issue criteria.

In the fourth triadic block—continuous adaptation, cultural resonance, and real interconnection—the focus shifts to the relationship between change, culture, and network. The indicators here must capture whether the system adapts without arbitrariness, whether cultural discourse maintains sufficient continuity with practice, and whether layers and areas are truly connected. This includes, for example, the frequency of relevant changes introduced without sufficient explanation, the number of adjustments later reversed, the existence of pilots before broad rollouts, the distance between declared culture and observed experience, increasing or decreasing use of opaque channels, the time needed to resolve issues involving several areas, dependence on bridge people to make the obvious circulate, and unequal access to synthesis or decision spaces depending on shift, time band, or proximity to the system’s narrative center.

In the fifth triadic block—integrated complex organization, volume management, and structural guarantees—the indicators must observe whether complexity is being integrated or

(82) Allen and Starr (1982) develop a hierarchical and nested reading of complex systems in which different levels of organization require differentiated observation. Allen, T. F. H., & Starr, T. B. (1982). *Hierarchy: Perspectives for Ecological Complexity*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

fragmented, whether volume is being absorbed without saturation, and whether guarantees truly reach the points where they are most needed. Here it is useful to measure process duplication, contradictions between procedures, the need for informal assembly across areas, backlog and flow volatility, sustained pressure on closure and recovery, drops in quality under high demand, effective equality of access to guarantees, response times within review circuits, and the real penetration of cross-functional areas into the most complex environments. This block makes visible whether the organization sustains its scale with form, or merely endures it through greater noise and greater invisible cost.

The usefulness of this triadic reading is twofold. On the one hand, it preserves the internal organization of the functions. On the other, it makes it possible to see whether the company presents isolated deficits or carries grouped weaknesses, which is often a sign of deeper structural problems. An organization may, for instance, possess acceptable formal memory while showing major failures in the adaptation–resonance–interconnection block; or it may maintain a robust framework of guarantees on paper while the basal block remains heavily degraded. Triadic reading helps make these configurations visible without losing the possibility of descending afterward to each specific function.

Table 2. Indicator families by triadic block in the multilevel corporate coherence audit

Triadic block	Functions	Core audit question	Illustrative indicator families
Block I — Base, belonging, and integrity	S1–S3	Does the organization provide a habitable and protective container?	Preventive vs. corrective maintenance; recurrence of unresolved physical incidents; onboarding quality; access to basic information; proportion of relevant instructions occurring off-channel
Block II — Time, memory, and growth	S4–S6	Does the organization manage time and expansion without temporal violence or institutional opacity?	Scheduled vs. actual breaks; recognized vs. generated overtime; reconstructability of records; dependence on “living archives”; permanent exceptions left by growth
Block III — Redistribution, threshold, and operational core	S7–S9	Does the system detect concentration of tension and respond before breakdown?	Overload concentration by team, shift, language, or queue; blocked-break frequency; weak-signal escalation time; time from pattern detection to structural action; quality of stable review spaces
Block IV — Adaptation, resonance, and interconnection	S10–S12	Does change remain legible and culturally consistent across layers and areas?	Frequency of unexplained changes; reversals after rollout; pilot coverage; gap between declared culture and observed practice; reliance on bridge individuals; off-channel coordination patterns
Block V — Integration, volume, and guarantees	S13–S15	Does scale remain integrated and protected under pressure?	Process duplication; backlog volatility; quality decline under peak demand; uneven access to guarantees; response times within review circuits; penetration of cross-functional protection into complex zones

Note. S16 is excluded from the audit grid because it is treated as the maximum emergent expression of the whole rather than as an operational function of equivalent rank.

9.2. Indicators by Organizational Level

The second layer of the measurement system consists in observing the organization by level. This is essential because the same function may be reasonably well developed in one part of the system and deeply weakened in another. In addition, the organization is recursive: the same functional logic may reappear within a team, a department, or a second-order leadership structure. For that reason, measurement by level should not be read as a rigid taxonomy, but as an analytical cut through the system at its most relevant empirical scales.

At the level of material and infrastructural support, the indicators should capture habitability, incident-resolution times, the ratio between preventive and corrective maintenance, the recurrence of deterioration, the availability of physical resources, the traceability of material support, and the degree to which this layer is included in review circuits. What matters here is both the quality of the environment and the structural recognition of those who sustain it.

At the level of the visible operational front line, the indicators should observe actual workload, transitions between tasks, effective breaks, end-of-shift closure, the traceability of instructions, the use of private channels for relevant management, access to operational support, and the ability to escalate patterns without disproportionate exposure. This layer often reveals with particular clarity the distance between the system's formal architecture and its real lived experience.

At the level of middle managers, it is useful to measure the simultaneous volume of functions they are expected to perform, the amount of time consumed by reaction as opposed to the time available for analysis, the frequency with which they informally compensate for structural deficits, their capacity to record recurrences, and the real room they have to apply rules without constantly falling back on patchwork solutions. This level is especially useful for measuring how much of the organization's apparent order is in fact being sustained through silent buffering.

At the level of head managers, the indicators should focus on pattern-reading, the quality of vertical translation, the proportion between incidents escalated as mere noise and those recognized as design problems, and the fidelity with which return from the system reaches leadership. What matters here is less abstract management activity than the quality of the structural filter.

At the level of department leadership, or second-order leadership where applicable, one should observe the capacity to reallocate resources, sensitivity to asymmetries, the time between the detection of a pattern and redesign, the quality of the return leadership receives, and the distance between declared priorities and effective structural correction. A leadership level may be saturated with indicators and yet still lack enough information to see how much of its apparent stability depends on unequal absorption.

In the cross-functional areas, measurement must capture not only formal existence but the actual reach of guarantees: the integration of common systems, equality of access, response times, penetration into complex zones, sufficient independence in review processes, and the quality of the support these areas provide to real operations. Here it is crucial to distinguish between a cross-functional area that exists in the organizational chart and one that actually touches the system's critical zone.

9.3. Indicators of Noise, Friction, and Discursive Closure

A fundamental part of the auditing system must focus on what organizations often perceive intuitively but measure poorly: structural noise, friction, and discursive closure. Noise can be observed in overlapping instructions, unnecessary forwarding, duplicate reporting, dependence on parallel channels, increased rework, the need for local reinterpretation in order to make a global rule function, and the loss of clarity in decision pathways. The more noise the system accumulates, the

more energy it consumes without gaining organization.

Friction becomes visible when layers, areas, or timescales repeatedly collide without the system turning that collision into redesign. It can be measured through recurrent bottlenecks, repeated conflicts between legitimate rights and insufficient coverage, chronic overload in certain time bands, dependence on lateral arrangements, or escalations that fail to correct the cause. The important point here is not to confuse every tension with poor health: relevant friction is the friction produced by poor articulation, not the friction that simply arises from complexity or difference.

Discursive closure is subtler, but equally important. It can be detected in falling participation in review spaces, a decline in upward signals from certain layers, the abandonment of formal channels because no one expects them to have any effect, an increase in moralizing language used to close down structural patterns, or a reduction in explicit disagreement while the underlying symptoms remain or worsen. A very silent system⁽⁸³⁾ is not necessarily a more stable one; it may be a system in which speech has ceased to be regarded as a useful route for correction.

9.4. Indicators of Material Habitability and Foundational Support

Given the centrality of the material base in this essay, it is useful to isolate a specific family of indicators for it. Among the most relevant are average time to resolve physical incidents, the proportion of preventive to corrective maintenance, the recurrence of failures in the same environment, the availability of critical supplies and means, the operational impact produced by material deterioration, and the presence or absence of this layer in review circuits where its information would be clearly relevant.

It is also important to observe the degree of institutional recognition accorded to this dimension. This can be measured by whether material incidents are treated as organizational issues or as logistical noise, whether the material layer has a voice in the review of recurrent problems, and whether the system demands its invisibility as a criterion of quality. A mature material base is not only one that fails infrequently; it is one that is sufficiently integrated⁽⁸⁴⁾ into the system that its deterioration does not need to reach visible extremes before being recognized.

9.5. Indicators of Actual Rest, Traceability, and Temporal Equity

The measurement of time should distinguish at least three planes: actual rest, temporal traceability, and temporal equity.

In actual rest, the main indicators are scheduled breaks versus breaks actually taken, the frequency with which breaks are blocked by coverage or flow, the duration of transitions between tasks, and the real margin for closing one cycle before entering the next demand. Measuring only the formal existence of a break produces an illusory image of protection.

In temporal traceability, the relevant variables are overtime generated versus overtime recognized, delay in recognition, the percentage of late closures automatically integrated into the system, and the degree of dependence on the manager for time to “count.” It is here that one sees

(83) Pinder and Harlos (2001) distinguish forms of organizational silence linked to fear and resignation in the face of perceived injustice. Pinder, C. C., & Harlos, K. P. (2001). *Employee silence: Quiescence and acquiescence as responses to perceived injustice. Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, 20, 331–369.

(84) Evans and McCoy (1998) study the role of the built environment in health and in the human experience of the workplace. Evans, G. W., & McCoy, J. M. (1998). *When buildings don't work: The role of architecture in human health. Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 18(1), 85–94.

most clearly whether the organization knows how to record not only the discipline it demands, but also the debt it generates.

In temporal equity, what matters is comparison across layers and areas: differences in the informal elasticity of time, the unequal distribution of overexertion, the concentration of end-of-shift overruns on the same profiles, differential exposure to off-shift demands, and the use of private contact for operational requirements. A company becomes temporally legible when it begins to treat time not only as a variable of demand, but also as a variable of dignity⁽⁸⁵⁾ and internal justice.

9.6. Indicators of Coverage, Saturation, and Redistribution

Coverage should not be measured as mere nominal headcount, but as effective absorption capacity⁽⁸⁶⁾. This requires crossing available people, time bands, languages, types of work, actual workload, and flow variability. The key indicators here are localized saturation, backlog, the recurrence of late closures on the same nodes, the frequency with which breaks are lost because of insufficient coverage, the concentration of workload by shift, and the proportion between demand and actual closing capacity.

Redistribution, in turn, is best observed through concentration indicators: what percentage of overtime, critical incidents, loss of rest, or absorption of exceptions repeatedly falls on the same profiles; which layers systematically bear more tension without receiving more structural support; and how the system behaves when legitimate rights, sick leave, vacations, or spikes in volume appear. A company that measures coverage and redistribution well ceases to interpret as individual oddity what is in fact a signal of insufficient design.

9.7. Multilevel Corporate Coherence Matrix

To prevent the audit from dissolving into an accumulation of disconnected signals, it is useful to build a multilevel corporate coherence matrix. Its function is not to produce a magic number⁽⁸⁷⁾, but to enable a cross-reading between operational functions and the system's empirical levels. The matrix works with fifteen rows, corresponding to S1–S15, organized into five triadic blocks. This allows the system to be read both function by function and by block:

- (1) Base, belonging, and integrity.**
- (2) Temporal balance, memory, and growth.**
- (3) Redistribution, threshold, and operational core.**
- (4) Adaptation, resonance, and interconnection.**
- (5) Integration, volume, and guarantees.**

The columns correspond to the levels or substructures under analysis: material and

(85) Perlow (1999) analyzes the social organization of work time and the internal distribution of time scarcity within the company. Perlow, L. A. (1999). *The time famine: Toward a sociology of work time*. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(1), 57–81.

(86) Hopp and Spearman (2008) formalize relationships among flow, load, variability, backlog, and effective capacity in complex operational systems. Hopp, W. J., & Spearman, M. L. (2008). *Factory Physics* (3rd ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

(87) Nardo et al. (2008) systematize the construction of composite indicators and emphasize the need to combine scoring, evidence, comparability, and aggregation criteria. Nardo, M., Saisana, M., Saltelli, A., Tarantola, S., Hoffman, A., & Giovannini, E. (2008). *Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators: Methodology and User Guide*. Paris: OECD.

infrastructural support, the visible operational front line, middle managers, head managers, department leadership or second-order leadership, cross-functional areas, and any additional unit the case may require. This matters because the matrix should not freeze the company at a single scale. It can be applied to the whole organization, to an area, to a team, to a time band, or to a second-order structure, provided the criterion of observation remains constant.

The basic coding of each cell follows the 0–3 scale defined in the general methodology:

- 0 --> for absence, opacity, or relevant functional collapse
- 1 --> for weak, merely formal, or highly fragile presence
- 2 --> for partial, unstable, or unevenly distributed presence
- 3 --> for solid, operational, and integrated presence

What matters will not be the isolated score, but the trend, the concentration of deficits, the differences between areas, and the quality of the empirical trace on which the score rests.

S16 will not be incorporated as an equivalent row within the matrix, since it does not represent one more operational function of the same rank, but the maximum emergent expression of the whole. It will instead be read afterward as a structural synthesis: the global image of coherence resulting from the way S1–S15 articulate with one another. In that sense, the matrix organizes the work carried out on the operational functions; S16 expresses the visible result of that articulation.

This internal auditing matrix does not replace the UC Scale. Rather, it constitutes a layer for capturing, ordering, and structuring corporate observables that is intended later to feed it. Put differently: the matrix makes it possible to build a functional profile of the system; the UC Scale, together with other normalization or visualization tools, may subsequently operate on that profile for comparison, synthesis, or broader reading, without any need to restate its specific formalization here. In this way, both theoretical duplication and the false impression that an internal organizational matrix could substitute for a wider comparative module are avoided.

9.8. Alert, Fragility, and Crisis Thresholds

Any useful organizational measurement system must ultimately be translated into thresholds for action. It is not enough to know that something is going wrong; one must be able to distinguish when a signal calls for observation, when it reveals growing fragility⁽⁸⁸⁾, and when it already demands urgent structural intervention. In this essay, it is proposed that at least three thresholds be used.

The alert threshold appears when certain indicators begin to deviate consistently, even though the system still compensates reasonably well: breaks that are increasingly blocked, growing use of private channels for operational management, increasing concentration of late closures, recurrent material deterioration, or rising rework caused by contradictory criteria. The objective here is not to dramatize, but to activate interpretation before the anomaly becomes normalized.

The fragility threshold appears when the deviation is no longer marginal and begins to reorganize

(88) Holling (1973) distinguishes stability and resilience and formulates the relevance of thresholds beyond which a system changes regime. Holling, C. S. (1973). *Resilience and stability of ecological systems*. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, 4, 1–23.

the behavior of the layers themselves: teams stop escalating issues because they no longer expect useful return, middle managers compensate in silence, shifts de facto cease to rotate, overtime counts only if someone actively fights for it, and cross-functional areas function well in comfortable zones but poorly in critical ones. At this stage, the organization can still correct without rupture, but it can no longer continue interpreting the phenomenon as a mere sum of cases.

The crisis threshold appears when the system loses the capacity to recognize the problem from within and requires clear intervention to avoid continued degradation. It usually combines several signals: widespread opacity in channels, a sharp fall in upward voice, systematic overloading of the same nodes, an open fracture between declared culture and actual practice, the normalized use of exception as rule, and an internal sense that almost everything works thanks to unequal absorption. The value of distinguishing these three thresholds lies in the fact that it forces measurement to be linked with governance, rather than merely with reporting.

9.9. Executive Dashboard and Periodic Review

For the measurement system to be useful, it needs a governable translation. That translation may take the form of an executive dashboard, but not just any dashboard. If it merely reproduces productivity, backlog, and formal compliance, it will only reinforce the system's blindness⁽⁸⁹⁾ to itself. The executive panel must combine outcome indicators with structural ones: habitability, real time, traceability, concentration of saturation, temporal inequality, quality of return, effective use of guarantees, and the distance between discourse and practice.

Not all signals require the same periodicity. Some need weekly or biweekly review—blocked breaks, the use of private channels for operational matters, saturation by time band, end-of-shift overruns. Others require monthly or quarterly review, such as the integration of new tools, the chronic persistence of certain shift patterns, repeated material deterioration, the quality of return between levels, or the gap between declared culture and effective experience. What matters is that each review be linked to a possible decision, not to the mere accumulation of data.

A good dashboard does not only show the current state; it also shows trend, concentration, responsible party, affected scale, and corrective pathway. Moreover, it should be able to dialogue with the visualization and normalization tools the organization may already have in place, provided these do not replace analysis with visual spectacle. Visualization has value when it makes the pattern visible; it loses that value when it becomes yet another layer of user-friendly opacity.

9.10. Practical Verification Against “Paper-Only” Measures

The final step in the auditing system consists in preventing this entire architecture from producing new “paper-only” measures. Genuine verification requires building a contrast between what the organization declares it has implemented and what the system actually experiences under pressure. The only serious way to do this is through triangulation⁽⁹⁰⁾.

A measure should be verified on at least four dimensions. First, its formal existence: that there is in fact a criterion, procedure, tool, or circuit. Second, its real use: that the people involved can

(89) Few (2006) defines the dashboard as a synthesis tool for tracking critical indicators, oriented toward decision-making rather than visual saturation. Few, S. (2006). *Information Dashboard Design: The Effective Visual Communication of Data*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media.

(90) Patton (1999) formulates triangulation as contrast among sources, methods, and perspectives in order to increase analytical credibility. Patton, M. Q. (1999). *Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis*. *Health Services Research*, 34(5 Pt 2), 1189–1208.

actually access it and do not depend on favors or heroic workarounds for it to function. Third, its observable effect: that it changes something in time, workload, traceability, voice, redistribution, or relational quality. And fourth, its resilience under pressure: that it does not disappear precisely when it is most needed, that is, in the zones and moments of greatest operational complexity.

Verification also requires comparing different kinds of sources: system traces, observation of pathways, documentation, experience across layers, temporal evolution, and subsequent results. A mature organization does not consider itself satisfied merely because a measure exists. It asks whether the system needs less opacity, less silent buffering, and less unequal wear since that measure was implemented. Only at that point does auditing cease to be self-description and begin to operate as a real criterion of organizational truth.

10. Implementing the corporate architecture

Designing a coherent corporate architecture is a demanding task; implementing it without turning it into yet another layer of rhetoric or ceremonial bureaucracy is even more demanding. The question is no longer which functions an organization needs or how they should be measured, but how to introduce real change into a system that continues to work, continues to produce, and yet at the same time carries inertias, filters, power asymmetries, and interpretive inequalities across layers. Implementing this architecture cannot be approached as a communications campaign or as a simple linear rollout of tools. It requires an ordered, incremental, multiscale⁽⁹¹⁾, and verifiable sequence, capable of changing the way the system functions without disorganizing continuity or declaring success before reality has actually changed.

The general logic of implementation rests here on a basic premise: complex systems are not corrected through simple imposition, but through contextual reading, prudent piloting, staged rollout, and continuous recalibration. Moreover, because the operational functions are distributed recursively and may reappear within any substructure, implementation should not be conceived only in top-down terms. It may begin in a subunit, a time band, a second-order directorate, or a cross-functional circuit, provided the design keeps the relationship between the local level and the general architecture clear. The guiding principle is this: nothing should be implemented at scale that has not first been understood in context, tested under real friction, and audited by the fruit it leaves behind.

(91) Kotter (1995) describes recurring errors in change processes and emphasizes the need for visible, staged, and sustained sequences of transformation. Kotter, J. P. (1995). *Leading change: Why transformation efforts fail*. *Harvard Business Review*, 73(2), 59–67.

Table 3. Implementation roadmap for the corporate architecture of multilevel coherence

Phase	Main purpose	Typical outputs	Core verification question
Diagnostic phase	Build a baseline of the real system	Structural map of pressure, opacity, asymmetry, degradation, and unequal absorption	Are we seeing the real system or only its official version?
Functional mapping phase	Translate evidence into an S1–S15 profile	Multilevel functional matrix and initial corporate coherence profile	Which functions are weakened, dominant, or merely formal?
Pilot phase	Test a limited intervention under real friction	Before/after evidence, local redesign, and identified resistances	Did the intervention actually change pathways, time, return, or redistribution?
Cross-cutting rollout phase	Scale the model with controlled local adaptations	Common implementation core, minimum rules, and protected local adjustments	Are local adaptations preserving the shared structural principle?
Audit and recalibration phase	Verify resilience under pressure and correct the design	Revised thresholds, corrected procedures, and updated indicators	Does the architecture still hold when urgency and variability increase?
Leadership training and structural literacy	Change the organization's reading capacity	Differentiated training by level and improved pattern recognition	Are actors naming patterns better and buffering less blindly?
Ethical safeguards, privacy, and non-retaliation	Protect purpose limitation and prevent misuse of the model	Access rules, restricted data use, safe feedback channels, and non-retaliation guarantees	Is the architecture protecting people while it reads the system?
Myth-and-ceremony prevention	Keep the model tied to observables and fruit	Ownership of measures, review frequencies, withdrawal criteria, and observable anchors	Is the model changing the system, or only its self-description?

Note. The phases are analytically distinct but partly iterative and overlapping in practice.

10.1. Diagnostic Phase

Any serious implementation must begin with a diagnostic phase broad enough to avoid two classic errors: mistaking partial perception for structural reading, and designing solutions around the noisiest problem rather than the most determining one. Diagnosis cannot be limited to climate surveys or aggregated productivity indicators. It must build a baseline⁽⁹²⁾ of the real system, including the material environment, effective time, operational channels, coverage, decision pathways, differentiated experience by layer, and the points at which workload either concentrates or disappears from the record.

This phase should combine several sources. On the one hand, formal documentation: organizational charts, shift grids, protocols, time-recording systems, escalation procedures, channel maps, available tools, and guarantee frameworks. On the other hand, observation of actual functioning: how instructions circulate, what portion of work is done outside the system, where breaks are blocked, which teams repeatedly bear the greatest number of exceptions, how material deterioration is distributed, which time bands are most isolated, and which layers filter the greatest amount of information before it reaches the top. And finally, cross-checking by levels and substructures: material support staff, the visible front line, middle managers, head managers,

(92) Checkland (1981) formulates systems inquiry as the construction of a rich diagnostic baseline of the problem prior to change design. Checkland, P. (1981). *Systems Thinking, Systems Practice*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

leadership at different scales, and cross-functional areas.

The result of this phase should not be a list of complaints or an inventory of incidents, but a structural map of the real system. That map should identify, at a minimum, where wear is concentrated, where traceability is lost, where time ceases to count in the same way, where interconnection between layers breaks down, and which operational functions appear weakened, overactivated, or merely formal. Only on the basis of such a reading can one move with confidence to functional mapping.

10.2. Functional Mapping Phase of the Real System

Once the baseline has been established, the second phase consists in translating that diagnosis into a functional mapping of the real system. The aim here is not to label areas with elegant names, but to build a profile that makes it possible to see which functions currently sustain the organization, which are weakened, which are overly dominant, and which exist only in discourse. For the purposes of this essay, this mapping should work with S1–S15 as operational functions and with S16 as the later emergent expression of the whole.

The mapping must be carried out at several scales⁽⁹³⁾. At a first level, a general profile of the organization is produced. At a second level, that profile is replicated across areas, shifts, teams, or second-order directorates so as to capture internal asymmetries. And at a third level, where necessary, it is applied to specific cases, scenes, or pathways in order to understand why certain tensions reappear again and again in the same nodes. This multiscale logic matters because the company does not display a single homogeneous form: highly developed substructures and deeply degraded ones may coexist within the same institutional container.

The result of this phase should be a living functional matrix, sufficiently clear to guide decision-making. At this stage, it is entirely legitimate to integrate the UC Scale and any normalization or visualization tools already available, provided they are used as instruments of reading and not as substitutes for analysis. The relationship between functional mapping, the organizational matrix, and the comparative scale should be complementary: mapping organizes; the matrix densifies; the scale synthesizes or compares; and visualization helps reveal configurations that dispersed text does not easily make visible.

10.3. Pilot Phase

No architecture of this kind should be rolled out all at once across the whole company. The third phase must therefore be a pilot phase. But not a cosmetic pilot, chosen in the most comfortable zone merely to ensure an apparently successful implementation. It must be a pilot realistic enough to subject the proposal to real friction⁽⁹⁴⁾. The chosen site should meet several conditions: significant operational pressure, clear signals of misalignment, a reasonable possibility of observation, actors willing to participate, and sufficient margin to compare a before and after.

Given the recursive character of the system, a pilot does not necessarily have to be an entire department. It may be a relevant substructure: a shift, a specific queue, a unit strongly dependent on

(93) Bar-Yam (1997) develops a multiscale reading of complex systems in which the same system requires different maps depending on level and resolution. Bar-Yam, Y. (1997). *Dynamics of Complex Systems*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

(94) Rogers (2003) places limited experimentation and observability of results among the attributes that favor the adoption of an innovation. Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Free Press.

material support, an interface between two areas, a specific management chain, or an aggregating directorate with several internal levels. What matters is that it allow several functions to be observed at once and that the intervention not be reduced to a single isolated dimension.

During this phase, it is advisable to work with few levers, but well integrated ones. For example: real channel traceability, protection of end-of-shift closure, review of localized coverage, improved access to voice by time band, integration of material support into the incident circuit, and a stable space for operational review. What matters is not to introduce a large number of measures, but to see whether, by touching certain nodes, the system begins to redistribute its tension more effectively. A well-designed pilot should produce enough evidence to answer three questions: what has truly changed, what has generated legitimate resistance, and which parts of the design need to be corrected before scaling.

10.4. Cross-Cutting Rollout Phase

Once the pilot has been corrected, the fourth phase is the cross-cutting rollout. Here a very common risk appears: moving from the pilot to a homogeneous and rigid rollout, as though all areas could absorb the same architecture in the same way. That mistake destroys the learning gained during the pilot at the very moment of scaling. Cross-cutting rollout must therefore combine a common core with controlled local adaptations⁽⁹⁵⁾.

The common core should include those rules and structures that cannot vary without fracturing overall coherence: traceability criteria, minimum rules concerning private channels, recognition of real time, the principle of basal support, review circuits, alert thresholds, minimum integration of cross-functional areas, and standards of verification. On top of that core, each unit or substructure may adjust procedures according to flow, schedule, type of work, position in the chain, or technical complexity, provided such adaptations do not destroy the common principle or reintroduce, through the back door, what the design is meant to correct.

Cross-cutting rollout also requires implementation governance. It is not enough to announce a new model and wait for each layer to translate it in its own way. There must be an implementation core with enough authority to coordinate timelines, resolve frictions between areas, review indicators, and protect the coherence of the rollout. That core should not function as a decorative committee, but as a body for accompaniment, recalibration, and guarantee, ensuring that implementation does not dissolve into a sum of scattered interpretations or into a new privilege for the areas already most visible.

10.5. Audit and Recalibration Phase

The fifth phase is, in fact, the point at which many implementations fail: audit and recalibration. The most common temptation is to consider implementation complete once the measure has been communicated, once managers have been trained, or once the dashboard begins to show activity. In reality, that is exactly when the important test begins: verifying whether the system maintains its new form when it comes back under pressure.

(95) Szulanski (1996) studies the difficulties of transferring best practices within the firm and pays special attention to adaptation without loss of consistency. Szulanski, G. (1996). *Exploring internal stickiness: Impediments to the transfer of best practice within the firm*. *Strategic Management Journal*, 17(Winter Special Issue), 27–43.

The audit must assess not only compliance, but structural resilience under real conditions⁽⁹⁶⁾. This means reviewing whether channels remain traceable when urgency increases, whether breaks remain genuinely usable when volume rises, whether overtime continues to be recognized when end-of-day closure becomes more difficult, whether middle managers actually buffer less silently, and whether cross-functional areas reach the places they did not reach before. An architecture that functions only under comfortable conditions remains fragile.

Recalibration, for its part, should not be understood as embarrassed backtracking, but as a natural part of implementation. A design of this kind needs to correct itself as the system returns feedback. In practical terms, this means that the organization should not cling to a form simply because “it has already been implemented,” but should ask honestly which parts of the design are producing fruit, which exist only as containers, and which need adjustment in order to avoid generating new incoherences. The combination of the functional matrix, the UC Scale, thresholds, and multisource evidence should make precisely that work possible without sacrificing continuity.

10.6. Leadership Training and Structural Literacy

No new organizational architecture can be sustained without a minimum degree of structural literacy among those who must operate it. This does not amount to motivational training or simple awareness-raising. It means teaching people to read the system differently. Implementation requires that each layer understand, at least, what function it fulfills within the whole, what kinds of noise or cost it may unintentionally displace onto other layers, and how to distinguish a local incident from a structural pattern.

Training should not be the same for everyone. Material support staff and the visible front line need clarity about channels, time, record-keeping, access to support, the possibility of cross-checking, and the meaning of the changes affecting their work. Middle managers need tools for reading recurrences, avoiding attribution bias, recording better without collapsing, and ceasing to compensate silently for what is already a design failure. Head managers need training in pattern recognition, faithful vertical translation, and the detection of political buffering. Leadership needs literacy in asymmetries, not only in aggregates, and in how to redistribute without becoming trapped by the dashboard. Cross-functional areas, for their part, must learn to design for the most complex environments and not only for the average case.

Useful training is not validated by attendance or immediate satisfaction. It is validated when reading changes⁽⁹⁷⁾. When a layer stops calling something an “individual case” that is already a pattern; when the use of private channels no longer seems like mere agility; when time stops being measured only in order to demand and begins to be counted in order to protect as well; and when the material base stops being perceived as logistical periphery. Structural literacy does not add one more theory; it changes what the organization becomes capable of seeing.

10.7. Ethical Safeguards, Privacy, and Non-Retaliation

Any implementation that aspires to observe the system better runs the risk of sliding toward surveillance, covert control, or retaliation against those who voice the most uncomfortable

(96) Argote and Miron-Spektor (2011) present organizational learning as the transformation of experience and feedback into knowledge usable for correcting design and practice. Argote, L., & Miron-Spektor, E. (2011). *Organizational learning: From experience to knowledge*. *Organization Science*, 22(5), 1123–1137.

(97) Senge (1990) proposes systems thinking as the move from isolated events toward patterns and structures that the organization learns to see. Senge, P. M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

feedback⁽⁹⁹⁾. For that reason, the architecture must incorporate, from the outset, a block of ethical safeguards, privacy protections, and non-retaliation measures. Without these safeguards, the system may indeed learn to measure better, but not necessarily to care better; it might simply become more sophisticated at classifying those who “cause problems.”

The first safeguard is purpose limitation. The data, records, and observations generated within this implementation must serve to redesign structure, detect fragility, and protect functioning, not to create new mechanisms of selective punishment. The second is minimization and proportionality: not everything needs to be recorded, nor does every interaction need to be analyzed. Only what is necessary to understand the pattern being corrected should be collected. The third is transparency: people must know what is being observed, for what purpose, with what limits⁽⁹⁸⁾, and who has access to it. The fourth is restricted access, especially where sensitive material, mixed channels, or evidence that may expose the weaker party in a relationship is involved.

The fifth safeguard, and perhaps the most important, is non-retaliation for feedback. A serious implementation must explicitly protect those who provide critical signals, participate in pilots, document pathways, or help make an uncomfortable pattern visible. If the organization uses the new architecture to identify “who is generating noise” instead of reviewing why that noise is being produced, it will have betrayed the model’s very purpose. The same applies to any measurement of interaction, tone, climate, or organizational sensing: if it is used to individualize blame before it is used to detect patterns of power, the tool ceases to be corrective and becomes a form of capture.

10.8. How to Prevent the Model from Becoming Myth and Ceremony

The final risk of any ambitious implementation is that it becomes myth and ceremony. That is, a new language—more sophisticated and more presentable—which the organization adopts without truly changing the way it distributes time, power, memory, support, or workload. This risk is especially high when the framework employed has explanatory power and cultural resonance. The more powerful the language, the easier it becomes to use it to ornament the system without actually touching it.

Avoiding that fate requires several decisions. First, vocabulary must remain in the service of observables, not the other way around. Every important term must be capable of being linked to a change in procedure, pathway, indicator, or evidence. Second, each measure must be tied to an owner, a review frequency, and a criterion for withdrawal or adjustment. If something is implemented and produces no effect, it must be possible to revise or remove it without that being experienced as a symbolic defeat. Third, the framework must be desacralized⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. It must not be turned into corporate identity or internal branding, but kept as a demanding instrument of reading and correction. Fourth, numbers and visualizations must be defetishized: neither the matrix, nor the scale, nor the dashboard, nor graphical tools should become substitutes for structural judgment or for comparison with the system’s actual fruit.

(98) Nissenbaum (2010) formulates contextual privacy as the adequacy between data, purposes, actors, and access rules within a specific social context. Nissenbaum, H. (2010). *Privacy in Context: Technology, Policy, and the Integrity of Social Life*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

(99) Alford (2001) documents the organizational and personal costs of retaliation against those who raise uncomfortable truths within a structure of power. Alford, C. F. (2001). *Whistleblowers: Broken Lives and Organizational Power*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

(100) Brunsson (1989) analyzes the separation between talk, decision, and action in organizations, showing how a structure may speak of change without modifying its actual practice. Brunsson, N. (1989). *The Organization of Hypocrisy: Talk, Decisions and Actions in Organizations*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

The architecture ceases to be ceremony when the organization no longer uses it to speak better about itself, but to require less opacity, less silent buffering, and less unequal wear in order to remain recognizable. That is the decisive test. If, after implementation, the material base ceases to be treated as a silent background, if time counts in a less unequal way, if middle managers buffer less and record better, if leadership listens earlier and corrects more precisely, and if cross-functional areas finally reach the zones where protection was previously weakest, then the architecture will have begun to cease being a promise. It will have entered, at last, the much more demanding terrain of forms that produce reality.

11. Discussion

At this point, the question is no longer only whether the proposed architecture is conceptually compelling, but whether it offers sufficient analytical and practical advantage over other ways of thinking about the organization. A discussion chapter should not merely reaffirm what has already been said; it should subject the proposal to a double test: on the one hand, to specify what it truly contributes; on the other, to identify clearly its risks, limits, and conditions of validity. That double task is especially important in a work such as this one, which does not seek to replace specialized frameworks, but rather to operate as an integrating architecture capable of reading relationships, layers, tensions, thresholds, and pathways with a different degree of granularity. The reference model itself is presented as a framework open to testing, calibration, and practical use, whose ultimate value depends not on its abstract elegance, but on its capacity to generate structural clarity and to function as a real tool without displacing empirical evidence or the methods proper to each domain.

Accordingly, the discussion that follows is organized in five movements. First, it examines what this proposal adds in relation to more classical organizational approaches. Second, it argues why a corporate reading based on multilevel coherence may offer specific advantages in high-pressure environments. Third, it makes explicit the risks of simplification, overregulation, or aestheticization of the model. Fourth, it clarifies its heuristic limits and the need to support it with applied evidence. And fifth, it outlines plausible avenues for empirical validation, case studies, and longitudinal testing. Rather than closing the essay in upon itself, this chapter seeks to prevent precisely that: that an architecture with real interpretive potential might become a framework immune to criticism.

11.1. Contributions of the Model Relative to Classical Organizational Approaches

One of the main contributions of this proposal is that it shifts the reading of the organization from a sum of relatively separable components toward a configuration of simultaneous, mutually conditioning functions. In many classical approaches, even where the complexity of the system is acknowledged, there remains a strong tendency to partition the analysis: culture on one side, processes on another, leadership on another, well-being on another, compliance on another. This partition may be methodologically convenient, but it leaves unread something decisive: the way those dimensions support, contradict, or hollow one another out in practice. The architecture proposed here offers precisely a language for observing that relational fabric, prioritizing the coupling among levels, the reduction of internal friction, and the need to read the system as a multilevel whole rather than as a sum of relatively autonomous subsystems.

A second relevant contribution is the explicit incorporation of the basal layer of material and infrastructural support into organizational analysis. Much of the corporate literature tends to begin either with the visible business front line or with the chain of command. This essay introduces a correction: before the visible operational front line, there is a layer that makes the system habitable, safe, and materially viable. This is not an added sensitivity, but a structural reordering of the point of

departure. That decision makes it possible to see something that approaches centered exclusively on process or culture often overlook: a company may possess strategy, technology, and leadership, and still remain incoherent if it neglects or renders invisible the material base that sustains its everyday form.

A third contribution lies in the reinterpretation of governance. Rather than thinking of leadership as a merely emitting apex, the proposal introduces the idea of an operational core that accumulates, remembers, integrates return, and resynchronizes. This reading is especially useful for understanding why many organizations do not collapse through lack of authority, but through an excess of reaction without integration. The problem is not that no one decides; the problem is that decisions do not always reconnect history, patterns, and levels in a way that enables the system to learn from itself. The functional centrality of the core, understood in these terms, makes it possible to discuss governance beyond formal command and to place it on the more demanding terrain of reintegration and structural correction.

A fourth important contribution is the shift from moral diagnosis to structural diagnosis. Where many models tend to translate friction into leadership styles, difficult profiles, or resistance to change, this proposal insists on asking instead about workload distribution, traceability, memory, noise, support, thresholds, and routes of return. It does not deny the ethical dimension or individual responsibility, but it prevents them from becoming the premature endpoint of interpretation. In that sense, the model does not merely add a new terminology; it reorders institutional causality: the focus moves from “who is failing” to “which relationships, timescales, and layers are producing this effect.”

Finally, the model contributes a transferable architecture for comparing and translating phenomena without forcing them into a single metric or a single discipline. That transferability was already present in the original framework as one of its central aspirations: to serve as a bridge between complexity, structural reading, and prudent formalization. In the organizational field, that value is considerable. It makes it possible to bring into relation issues that are often treated separately—rest, traceability, climate, saturation, the material base, guarantees, reputation—without collapsing them into a single cause or losing sight of the fact that they belong to the same underlying architecture.

11.2. Advantages of a Corporate Reading Grounded in Multilevel Coherence

The main advantage of a reading based on multilevel coherence is that it makes it possible to see where the system is actually being sustained. In many organizations, apparent continuity is interpreted as a sign of health. Yet continuity may be resting on the silent buffering of middle managers, the temporal compression of the front line, the exclusion of certain layers from common systems, the degradation of the material environment, or the excessive filtering of information on its way upward. A multilevel reading does not automatically eliminate these problems, but it makes it harder for them to remain invisible beneath aggregated indicators or beneath an excessively tidy narrative of how the organization functions. By bringing into relation bottom-up support, top-down regulation, return across layers, and accumulation at the center, it makes visible which part of the

system is paying the highest cost for the stability of the whole.

Another important advantage is that it reduces the probability of mistaken attribution. When the organization lacks a sufficiently robust relational architecture, recurrences tend to be personalized: “it is always the same people,” “that team never quite works,” “that time band is always noisier,” “that manager creates problems.” A multilevel reading makes it possible to reopen that interpretation and ask first about coverage, channels, shift distribution, access to the organization, workload by type of task, or inequality across areas. It does not remove the need for judgment about conduct, but it prevents explanation from closing too quickly around the individual when the problem has not yet been properly read as structure.

Multilevel coherence also offers a decisive advantage for intervention: it enables more integrated corrections. Where partial approaches tend to produce patches—a rest improvement without touching coverage, a voice policy without reviewing filters, a traceability rule without revising time, or a formal guarantee that never penetrates complex environments—this proposal forces us to examine how the functions touch one another. That does not guarantee success, but it raises the quality of design. An organization that adopts this logic learns to distrust overly isolated solutions and to ask what cost they are displacing, which function they are neglecting, and which layer will ultimately absorb what the measure fails to resolve.

There is, finally, a deeper advantage: multilevel coherence makes it possible to work with a less naive notion of improvement. The goal is not only to produce more or to reduce the number of incidents; it is to make the system need less opacity, less heroism, and less unequal absorption in order to keep functioning. This way of understanding improvement is especially useful in high-intensity corporate environments, where apparent efficiency may coexist for long periods with silent deterioration at the base. Coherence appears here not as an abstract value, but as the reduction of structural noise, the increase of legibility, and the capacity to sustain form under stress without relying on diffuse organizational violence.

11.3. Risks of Simplification, Overregulation, or Aestheticization of the Model

Precisely because the proposal has integrative power, its first risk is simplification. There is a temptation to turn a multilevel architecture into a quick classification template: this area would be one function, this problem another, this layer would “represent” some particular dimension. Such use impoverishes the model and makes it rigid. The original formulation itself warns that the functions should not be read as closed parts, but as simultaneous, recursive, and multiscale roles. If the corporate translation forgets that, the architecture loses one of its greatest virtues and becomes a simplistic taxonomy.

The second risk is overregulation. An organization could use this framework to justify an indiscriminate increase in procedures, records, matrices, dashboards, and reviews, until it produces a system so heavily loaded with meta-control that it generates more friction than it was meant to correct. This possibility should be taken seriously. An architecture of coherence cannot become an

uncritical multiplication of instruments. If it does, it would fall into exactly what it criticizes: an excess of container without source. The right measure is not the one that records the most, but the one that makes what is necessary legible with the least additional noise possible.

The third risk is the aestheticization of the model. This is probably one of the most dangerous. An architecture with transversal ambition, careful language, and the power to order complexity can easily be converted into a sophisticated institutional narrative, an element of internal branding, or a symbolic iconography of leadership. When that happens, the system begins to benefit symbolically from the model without allowing the model to unsettle its real architecture. This danger had already been formulated through the distinction between source and container: a form may pose without breathing; a system may speak of coherence without producing it. The decisive criterion remains fruit. If the organization speaks better about itself while continuing to rely on the same opacities, inequalities, and silent absorptions, then the model has not corrected the structure; it has only refined the language by which that structure is justified.

A fourth risk is vertical instrumentalization. In the wrong hands, an architecture of this kind could be used to diagnose more finely without actually redistributing cost, or even to monitor better without protecting better. This would be especially serious in dimensions such as traceability, climate sensing, or interaction analysis. That is why the essay has insisted on ethical safeguards, purpose limitation, and non-retaliation for return. If the system turns the new reading into a more sophisticated mechanism for individualizing problems before it reviews structure, then it will have perverted the very meaning of the proposal.

11.4. Heuristic Limits and the Need for Applied Evidence

This essay must acknowledge its limits clearly. The first is that its architecture remains heuristic. That does not invalidate it; it situates it. A heuristic does not seek to close the phenomenon, but to make it more legible and more operational without reducing it to a single variable. The reference model itself insists that it should not replace disciplinary metrics, present itself as a closed system, or treat the number of functions as a magical constant. Its aspiration is more restrained: to offer a transferable architecture for thinking and comparing, open to testing, critique, and refinement.

The second limit concerns translation across domains. The fact that an architecture is conceptually fertile does not mean that every organization will fit equally well into its categories. Shift-intensive sectors, knowledge organizations, industrial companies, logistics environments, public administrations, or highly digitized platforms may require different adjustments in indicators, relative weightings, thresholds, and points of entry. The model gains strength not when it is applied identically everywhere, but when it supports such calibration without losing its basic coherence. On this point, the original proposal is clear in calling for contextual parameterization, testable studies, and analyses of stability and sensitivity.

The third limit concerns applied evidence. Until an architecture has passed through real cases, with real noise, incomplete data, resistance, interests, and temporal trajectories, it cannot be known with confidence what it illuminates and what it distorts. That is why this essay should not be read as closure, but as a proposal that requires later phases of validation: case studies, longitudinal

comparisons, inter-area pilots, contrasts between baseline conditions and subsequent fruit. An honest discussion does not weaken the work by recognizing this; on the contrary, it makes it methodologically stronger. A framework that cannot be put to the test, or that does not admit its own adjustment, quickly drifts into dogma.

There is, finally, an interpretive limit: every broad architecture runs the risk of becoming too explanatory and, for that very reason, too indulgent toward complexity. In other words, there is a danger that, because so many things can be read structurally, the need to act on concrete responsibilities may become blurred. For that reason, the heuristic must coexist with clear institutional decisions. Understanding a system better cannot serve as an excuse to postpone indefinitely the correction of what is already visible, unjust, or harmful. Good complexity does not anesthetize action; it sharpens it.

11.5. Possibilities for Empirical Validation and Case Studies

The proposal opens several plausible avenues for empirical validation. The most immediate is the construction of testable case studies, with explicit mapping of the system, its environment, the selected indicators, and the type of interpretive fruit expected. The original framework itself suggests this direction very clearly: batteries of cases, explicit mapping methodologies, indicators for inferring dominant functions, and validation through clarity, consistency, explanatory power, and practical usefulness without reductionism. This orientation is especially fertile for the organizational field, where the combination of intensive case study and comparison across units can yield highly valuable learning.

A second avenue is longitudinal validation. Many of the dimensions central to this essay—structural noise, traceable memory, redistribution of tension, degradation of breaks, the chronic persistence of exceptions, and the shifting of costs between levels—cannot be properly evaluated in a single snapshot. They require temporal observation. Before-and-after designs, pilots with follow-up, comparisons between units that do or do not deploy certain measures, and readings of trajectories under pressure would provide much stronger evidence than a single punctual inspection.

A third avenue is methodological triangulation. The proposed architecture invites the combination of system data, process observation, documents, channel traces, interviews, self-reports, time metrics, and qualitative analysis of the pathways followed by particular incidents. This mixture is not a concession to eclecticism; it responds to the object's own multilevel nature. If the organization is a configuration of functions, timescales, supports, tensions, and returns, then its validation can hardly rest on a single source of evidence.

A fourth possibility is simulation and comparative visualization. The reference framework explicitly opens the door to simulation, to the exploration of dominant states, to the observation of thresholds, and to visualization as an aid for detecting regularities and anomalies. In the corporate field, this could translate into flow models, maps of overload concentration, diagrams of return across levels, or representations of saturation and redistribution. Not as a substitute for reality, but as an instrument for making visible what would otherwise remain encapsulated in anecdotal

language.

Finally, a fifth avenue of validation lies in measuring the organizational fruit of implementation. This is perhaps the most demanding, and the one most faithful to the spirit of the work. An architecture of this kind should, after a reasonable period, be able to show greater reconstructive clarity, less dependence on opaque channels, better distribution of real time, greater capacity for return, less need for heroes to keep the form in place, and a verifiable reduction of useless friction. The question would then no longer be only whether the model “explains” well, but whether it helps the organization need less wear in order to remain recognizable, stable, and capable of correction. That would probably be the most convincing kind of evidence.

Taken together, this discussion does not seek to shield the proposal, but to leave it in a more fertile position: structured enough to be useful, open enough to be testable, and demanding enough that the decisive criterion is no longer the system’s self-description, but the form and fruit it is able to produce when subjected to the test of real work.

12. Conclusions

The line of argument developed in this essay began from a simple yet far-reaching intuition: many organizations do not fail primarily because of a lack of talent, commitment, or individual effort, but because they sustain their continuity through an internally misaligned architecture. What, from the outside, may appear as productivity, culture, or stability may, from within, be resting on an unequal distribution of time, wear, voice, traceability, and real access to protection. The problem, therefore, is not merely one of management, leadership, or process. In a deeper sense, it is a problem of form.

From that starting point, the essay proposed a reading of the company as a multilevel, multilayer system rather than as a simple sum of departments, individuals, or tools. That re-reading made it possible to introduce several important corrections. The first was to restore centrality to material and infrastructural support, thereby correcting the bias that identifies what is “basic” with the first visible business role. The second was to shift the analysis from moral judgment toward structural diagnosis, asking less who is failing and more which functions, pathways, channels, or load distributions are producing a given effect. The third was to show that institutional coherence cannot be inferred from rules, discourse, or image, but from the fruit the system leaves behind in the clarity of work, the reduction of internal friction, the quality of its returns, and its capacity to correct itself without structural violence.

From this perspective, the proposed architecture should not be read as a closed theory of the ideal company, but as a rigorous tool for thinking more clearly about organizational design, measurement, and transformation. Its value does not lie in adding one more rhetoric to the organizational conversation, but in offering a grid capable of making visible certain incoherences that often become normalized: the two-speed company, the opacity of private channels, the silent absorption of overtime, the chronic persistence of exceptions, the loss of voice in certain time bands, the persistent overload of middle managers, and the peripheral treatment of those who sustain the material container. If this essay has any merit, it should be found there: in having shown that these issues are not marginal anomalies, but symptoms of a structural form that has not yet learned how to harmonize demand, support, and return.

12.1. Toward a Structurally Coherent Company

The principal conclusion of this work is that a coherent company is not one that eliminates every conflict, every peak of pressure, or every operational friction. Such an expectation would be naïve and even impoverishing. A coherent organization is, rather, one that manages to sustain complexity without chronically depending on opacity, unilateral sacrifice, structural improvisation, or the silencing of return. It is neither a soft company nor a static one. It is a company whose form allows movement without destroying the base that sustains it.

That implies several things at once. It implies recognizing that material habitability is not a secondary housekeeping issue, but a basal condition of reality. It implies that initial belonging cannot be built through humiliation, disorientation, or purely instrumental treatment. It implies that the institutional container must be intact, that is, capable of protecting and holding even when

pressure increases. It implies that time cannot be measured only in order to demand, but also in order to allow closure, recovery, and compensation. It implies that memory must be traceable enough for the system to learn. It implies that growth cannot consist in increasing complexity without increasing integration. It implies that tension must be redistributed rather than naturalized in the same nodes. It implies that critical thresholds must be read before deterioration becomes identity. It implies that the core of governance must remember, integrate, and resynchronize, not merely command. And finally, it implies that external projection will be legitimate only if it rests on an internal experience that does not have to be concealed in order to appear valuable.

To speak, then, of a structurally coherent company is not to speak of perfection. It is to speak of an organization that reduces its dependence on invisible wear, that corrects itself better before it breaks, that listens better before it needs open conflict, and that distributes its costs less arbitrarily. Coherence does not eliminate difficulty; it gives it form. And a company that achieves that becomes not only fairer, but also more intelligible to itself.

12.2. Performance, Dignity, and Traceability as an Inseparable Triad

One of the strongest theses running through this essay is that performance, dignity, and traceability should not be treated as competing dimensions, but as an inseparable triad of organizational maturity. Much contemporary business thinking remains trapped in false oppositions: either people are protected or the business is protected; either traceability is gained or agility is lost; either dignity is respected or standards are diluted. This work has defended the opposite thesis: when an organization separates these three dimensions too sharply, it ultimately damages all three.

Performance without dignity may produce short-term results, but it does so at the cost of degrading the relational and material base on which it depends. In that scenario, the company becomes increasingly dependent on temporal compression, individual heroics, silent absorption, and inequalities that sooner or later erode quality, stability, and learning capacity. Dignity without traceability, for its part, risks remaining at the level of moral language, good intentions, or declared culture incapable of being translated into real circuits of protection. And traceability without dignity may turn into a new device of control, a way of recording more accurately without redistributing more justly—in other words, a refinement of the container without a real improvement in fruit.

The triad functions only when its elements sustain one another. Dignity needs traceability if it is not to remain an abstract affirmation. Traceability needs dignity if it is not to degrade into cold surveillance. And performance needs both if it is not to depend structurally on opacity, arbitrariness, or unequal exhaustion. In a mature company, performance is not demonstrated only by the amount of work that gets done, but also by the quality of the path that work has followed. Wherever time counts differently depending on hierarchy, wherever the private channel replaces the legitimate circuit, wherever overexertion is poorly recorded, or wherever the front line absorbs what design has failed to integrate, performance may still exist, yes—but it is no longer structurally healthy performance. It is performance sustained by a debt that someone is paying.

For that reason, one of the most important contributions of this essay has been to propose that the evaluation of an organization should not be exhausted by productivity indicators, isolated climate indicators, or the mere existence of procedures. A company should begin asking, with far greater seriousness, to what extent its performance does or does not depend on the erosion of dignity and on the opacity of pathways in order to sustain itself. That question is uncomfortable, but it is also clarifying. It forces us out of the fantasy that whatever functions is therefore well designed.

12.3. The Organization as a System That Learns Not to Devour Itself

Perhaps the most precise image for summarizing the underlying thesis of this essay is this: a mature organization is one that learns not to devour itself. It devours itself when it consumes its material base without recognizing it. It devours itself when it requires the front line to compensate for what design has failed to solve. It devours itself when it turns middle management into the silent cushion for all of its contradictions. It devours itself when management layers dampen too much of the truth coming upward. It devours itself when leadership governs on the basis of too clean an image of the real system. And it devours itself, finally, when its cross-functional areas protect the easy spaces better than those in which the integrity of the system is most at stake.

Learning not to devour itself means something very concrete: turning accumulated experience into redesign, rather than into resignation. It means that the system must be able to receive return without automatically treating it as a threat. It means that saturation must cease to be read only as an inevitable tension of the business and begin to be read also as a possible failure of redistribution, time, or framework. It means that rights must not become quotas set against the team itself. It means that the voice of the least visible time bands must be able to enter the architecture of decision without depending exclusively on prudent or political filters. And it means that the organization must stop silently rewarding the capacity to endure more instead of the capacity to reorganize better.

This idea also has an important temporal dimension. A company does not learn not to devour itself through a single redesign or by means of a single policy. It learns when it acquires habits of return, review, and reintegration. When it begins to close cycles better. When it stops calling an “isolated case” what is already a recurrence. When it recognizes its thresholds before deterioration becomes the norm. When memory does not remain archived, but returns as a criterion for action. And when improvement ceases to be defined as “doing more with the same” and begins also to be defined as “needing less hidden wear in order to produce with form.”

In that sense, an organization that learns not to devour itself is not less demanding. It is often, in fact, more demanding of its own architecture. It allows itself fewer excuses. It is less tolerant of complexity functioning as an alibi for inequality. And it compels itself to review whether what it presents as the inevitability of the business is not, in reality, a design decision that has not yet been corrected.

12.4. Future Agenda for Research and Development

Like every proposal of this kind, this essay does not close the field; it opens it. The main future line of work should consist in building testable case studies across different sectors and organizational

scales. It would be necessary to observe how this architecture behaves in service and sales environments, in industrial operations, in knowledge-intensive organizations, in public administrations, or in hybrid systems with strong technological and logistical dependence. Such comparison would not only make it possible to verify the fertility of the model, but also to identify which functions acquire greater weight according to the type of organization and which methodological adjustments are advisable.

A second future line concerns the refinement of indicators. The essay has proposed a measurement system rich enough for a design phase, but still open to calibration. It would be especially useful to develop finer anchor tables, sector-specific comparative scales, triangulation protocols, and minimum standards for evaluating noise, traceability, redistribution, material habitability, and legitimate projection without turning measurement into yet another unproductive overload.

A third line should address longitudinal validation. It is essential to determine whether an architecture of this kind not only describes the organization better, but also helps transform it in a stable way. Before-and-after studies, pilots with temporal follow-up, and analyses of what happens when certain measures are introduced into zones of sustained high pressure would all be necessary. Only then will it be possible to know whether the proposal withstands real contexts or is convincing only under low-friction conditions.

A fourth future line lies in organizational simulation and visualization. The possibility of building multilevel matrices, maps of overload concentration, diagrams of return between layers, or dashboards of corporate coherence should not be underestimated. Not as a substitute for lived experience, but as a way of making visible what, in many organizations, remains dispersed across reports, intuitions, and localized conflicts. Used well, this line could offer tools of great value for leadership, internal audit, and cross-functional review processes.

A fifth promising line concerns integration with analyses of climate, prosody, interaction, and psychosocial risk. One of the most fertile intuitions emerging from this work is that power, saturation, and incoherence do not manifest themselves only in numbers or explicit decisions, but also in ways of speaking, in interruptions, in silences, in channel use, and in informal distributions of legitimacy. Exploring these dimensions more precisely could greatly enrich the system's capacity for early detection.

And finally, one decisive line remains open: the ethical and political discussion of what it means to implement an architecture of this kind without turning it into a new apparatus of legitimation or control. That debate is indispensable. A more legible organization is not necessarily a more just one if legibility is used to monitor more effectively rather than to redistribute more fairly. The future agenda, therefore, should not be limited to making the model more precise, but should also ensure that it remains oriented toward producing structures that are more habitable, more traceable, more corrigible, and less dependent on the silent degradation of their most exposed layers.

Taken together, the conclusion of this essay may be stated in sober terms: a company does not demonstrate maturity only through its ability to produce, grow, or impose order. It demonstrates

maturity through its ability to make performance compatible with dignity, traceability compatible with agility, and complexity compatible with legibility. When it succeeds in doing so, it does not eliminate all tension; but it does cease to turn that tension into an unequal destiny for those who sustain the system from lower down, from further within, or from further away from the dominant narrative. That is where an organization truly begins to cease resembling a merely functional structure and starts becoming a more conscious form of shared continuity.

Appendix A. Full Multilevel Corporate Coherence Matrix (S1–S15 × Organizational Levels)

This appendix provides the operational audit instrument corresponding to the multilevel corporate architecture developed in the main text. It is designed for structured qualitative coding, mixed-method organizational audit, or comparative diagnosis across units, teams, time bands, or departments. S16 is not scored here as an equivalent operational function; it is inferred qualitatively after examining the configuration of S1–S15 across levels.

Whenever possible, each cell should be scored on the basis of triangulated evidence rather than a single source. A minimum evidentiary basis would normally combine two or more of the following: documentary trace, system logs, channel evidence, direct observation, cross-layer interviews, operational records, or comparative review across shifts or units.

A.1. Coding anchors

Table A1. Coding anchors for the multilevel corporate coherence matrix

Score	Anchor	Interpretation
0	Absent / opaque / collapsed	No usable evidence of the function at that level, or presence so compromised that it does not meaningfully protect, organize, or stabilize the system.
1	Weak / merely formal / fragile	The function exists mainly on paper, depends on exceptional effort or local goodwill, or breaks down easily under pressure.
2	Partial / uneven / unstable	The function is present but inconsistently distributed, intermittently effective, or vulnerable under sustained operational strain.
3	Solid / operational / integrated	The function is clearly present, traceable, resilient under pressure, and meaningfully connected to the wider system.

Note. Use N/A where a level does not exist by design in the observed structure. Averages, where used, should be computed only across applicable cells.

A.2. Organizational level key

Table A2. Organizational levels used in the matrix

Abbreviation	Organizational level	Working definition
MS	Material and infrastructural support	Cleaning, maintenance, facilities, technical-material support, replenishment, and equivalent functions that sustain the physical container.
FL	Visible operational front line	Customer-facing or directly operational roles where demand becomes lived work.
MM	Middle managers	Supervisors, coordinators, team leaders, and equivalent figures of proximate coordination.
HM	Head managers	The managerial layer above immediate coordination, responsible for pattern reading, prioritization, and second-order vertical translation.
DL	Department leadership	Department directors or equivalent second-order leadership with authority to reallocate resources and redefine structural priorities.
XF	Cross-functional guarantee areas	Human Resources, Labor Relations, Occupational Health and Safety, Compliance, Systems, Facilities, and equivalent guarantee or support functions.

A.3. Recommended use

Score each applicable cell from 0 to 3 using the anchors above. Then read the instrument in four ways: by function across levels, by level across functions, by triadic block, and by dispersion between levels. Large cross-level gaps are often more revealing than averages. Where aggregation is useful, it should remain secondary to the qualitative reading of the pattern.

A.4. Full matrix by triadic block

Table A3. Block I — Base, belonging, and integrity (S1–S3)

Function	MS	FL	MM	HM	DL	XF
S1 — Habitable base	Adequate tools, supplies, maintenance routines, and safe physical conditions	Clean, safe, workable environment for daily service execution	Local ability to escalate and resolve material degradation promptly	Deterioration patterns recognized as operational, not merely incidental	Resources allocated so habitability remains a structural condition of performance	Facilities, OHS, and systems integrate habitability into common review circuits
S2 — Basal belonging	Respectful integration and recognition of basal support roles	Clear onboarding, intelligible rules, and safe space to ask	Non-humiliating local induction and fair team incorporation	Consistent belonging standards across shifts and teams	Belonging not dependent on status or narrative proximity	HR and Labor Relations protections reach all layers, including support roles
S3 — Container integrity	Safe reporting of material risks within protected channels	Relevant instructions and corrections remain in legitimate channels	Local authority exercised within framework, not ad hoc force	Informal fixes do not replace protected organizational routes	Framework remains stable and protective under pressure	Guarantee areas constrain arbitrariness and preserve auditable pathways

Note. This block should be read as the organization's foundational layer of habitability, legitimate entry, and protected containment.

Table A4. Block II — Time, memory, and growth (S4–S6)

Function	MS	FL	MM	HM	DL	XF
S4 — Time–workload balance	Task pacing and response windows do not create permanent compression	Breaks, transitions, and shift closure are actually usable	Real room to redistribute load instead of only firefighting	Saturation visible by shift, queue, language, or work type	Temporal inequities corrected through staffing and redesign	Time tools and HR systems record both demand and debt
S5 — Traceable institutional memory	Material incidents and fixes leave accessible, useful records	Key instructions, escalations, and closures are reconstructable	Recurrences documented as patterns, not private memory	Cross-team learning preserved beyond individual holders of knowledge	Decisions leave trace, rationale, and follow-up	Common systems ensure versioning, access control, and auditability
S6 — Coherent growth	Growth includes infrastructure, equipment, and support capacity	New tools do not multiply exceptions or workaround burden	Scaling reduces patchwork instead of increasing it	Growth effects monitored for uneven strain across teams	Volume expansion matched by integration and real capacity	Rollouts include complex, remote, and shift-based environments

Note. This block should show whether the organization expands and sustains demand without temporal violence, institutional amnesia, or fragmented scaling.

Table A5. Block III — Redistribution, threshold, and operational core (S7–S9)

Function	MS	FL	MM	HM	DL	XF
S7 — Redistribution of tension and resources	Material-support peaks not chronically concentrated on the same nodes	Overload not repeatedly dumped on the same people or shifts	Local redistributive authority and backup are available	Concentrated strain is visible across teams and schedules	Resources move toward accumulated tension, not away from it	Protections intensify where exposure and variability are greatest
S8 — Recognition of critical thresholds	Recurring deterioration treated as early warning, not background noise	Blocked rest, late closures, and channel drift flagged early	Weak signals escalated before they harden into breakdown	Thresholds read as structural patterns, not anecdotes	Alert, fragility, and crisis triggers linked to action	Cross-functional review activates before damage becomes normalized
S9 — Operational core	Material return can reach the decision center	Frontline feedback reaches the core without excessive filtering	Patterns move upward and return as usable criterion	Core integrates cross-team history and redesign needs	Stable resynchronization space exists and actually acts	Guarantee areas both feed and are guided by the core

Note. This block is especially sensitive to hidden asymmetries: systems often appear stable here until concentration, delay, and weak return become chronic.

Table A6. Block IV — Adaptation, resonance, and interconnection (S10–S12)

Function	MS	FL	MM	HM	DL	XF
S10 — Continuous adaptation without arbitrariness	Operational changes are absorbable at the material base	Changes are explained, piloted, and not purely arbitrary	Adaptation does not depend on endless local improvisation	Reversals and change fatigue are monitored	Redesign follows explicit criteria, timing, and review	Common systems support controlled rather than chaotic change
S11 — Verifiable cultural resonance	Respect and inclusion extend to basal support roles	Declared values match daily treatment, correction, and tone	Managerial practice aligns with official culture	Silencing, inconsistency, and mixed signals are visible	The same cultural standard applies across layers	Procedures and access routes verify, rather than merely proclaim, culture
S12 — Real interconnection	Support staff can enter relevant operational loops	Frontline can reach other areas without bridge heroics	Translation spaces exist across teams, shifts, and queues	Cross-team issues do not remain trapped in silos	Interdepartmental coordination is timely and reconstructable	Guarantee areas are connected to live operations, not only paperwork

Note. This block should be read for its relational density: A system may show active change and strong cultural language here while still failing to connect layers in a workable way.

Table A7. Block V — Integration, volume, and guarantees (S13–S15)

Function	MS	FL	MM	HM	DL	XF
S13 — Integrated complexity	Material base remains integrated as complexity grows	Added complexity does not fragment daily workflow	Multiple systems and processes remain coordinable without chronic patching	Specialization stays legible across teams and reporting lines	Differentiation is matched by integrative mechanisms	Common frameworks reduce fragmentation instead of adding layers
S14 — Volume management without saturation	Support capacity scales with operational peaks and variability	Demand peaks do not normalize permanent saturation	Staffing and routing absorb flow realistically	Backlog, volatility, and overload concentration are monitored	Volume targets are tied to sustainable capacity	Systems, time rules, and guarantees remain effective under peak pressure
S15 — Structural guarantees	Support staff have equal access to rights and review routes	Guarantees reach exposed operational zones in practice	Managers have clear procedures and protected escalation routes	Review processes remain independent of political filtering	Rights and protections are not allocated by status proximity	Guarantee architecture is active, equitable, and auditable

Note. This block should distinguish between organizations that merely accumulate scale and organizations that integrate scale while preserving legitimacy and protection.

A.5. Optional aggregation rule

Where a summarized profile is needed, the following rule is recommended:

- 1.- Score each applicable cell from 0 to 3.
- 2.- Compute a function score as the mean of its applicable cells across levels.
- 3.- Compute a block score as the mean of its three function scores.
- 4.- Inspect dispersion across levels before interpreting any mean.
- 5.- Treat the overall quantitative profile as descriptive rather than decisive.

A high average with strong internal dispersion should be treated as a warning sign rather than as evidence of global coherence.

A.6. Qualitative inference for S16

S16 should be inferred qualitatively, not mechanically calculated. After reviewing S1–S15, the auditor should ask:

- Does the organization project legitimacy without heavily depending on opacity, silent buffering, or unequal wear?
- Does coherence appear across blocks, or only in isolated islands of good practice?
- Can the system correct itself with traceable return and real redistribution, rather than through recurring patchwork?
- Is the organization externally presentable because it is internally better articulated, or because internal degradation is being concealed?

A strong S16 inference would require not perfection, but a recognizable form of continuity, legitimacy, and projection emerging from the articulated functioning of the previous fifteen operational functions.

A.7. Short insertion note for the manuscript

You can place the appendix opening sentence like this:

Appendix A provides the full multilevel corporate coherence matrix (S1–S15 × organizational levels) proposed in Chapters 8–10 as an operational instrument for audit, comparative diagnosis, and structured qualitative coding.

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Editorial note and statements

Editorial note

This essay forms part of the Universal Coherence (UC) project and applies its structural framework to the analysis of the company as a multilevel system. Its purpose is to offer a heuristic tool for reading, designing, and correcting organizations through the coherence among layers, functions, timescales, channels, and material conditions.

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