# What Makes a Flexible and Functional Organization?

: Project Fumbaro Eastern Japan driven by Structural Constructivism

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**March 11, 2011.** Eastern Japan was hit by a devastating earthquake. The Great East Japan Earthquake and the consequent Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant accident drove Japan into a national crisis. The number of missing or dead reached 18,800 and in addition 2,916 citizens died from the after effects of the complex disaster. In total 21,716 people lost their lives and 247,000 survivors are living in temporary accommodation (as of July 2014).

    "*Project Fumbaro Eastern Japan*" (PFEJ) is known for being the largest and most functional organization supporting survivors utilizing a number of Social Networking Service (SNS) and a Philosophy named "*Structural constructivism*". "Fumbaro" means 'hang in there', a term used by local people in Eastern Japan. The new support system made it possible to support more than 3,000 temporary shelters and temporary housing by the way of over 35,000 deliveries. Additionally, more than 3,000 volunteers were mobilized for over 30 various types of projects, including: Home Appliance, Heavy Equipment License, Study Aids for Kids, Entertainment, PC + Internet Use, Writing Encouragement Letters, Geiger Counter Use, Hand-made Goods, Jobs Using Sewing Machines, Horticulture, Job Assistance, Animal Rescue Team, Handicraft, Fishery, Disaster Prevention Education and Resilience Support Projects. PFEJ enabled people around the world to support survivors directly through various types of projects to suit their needs. This means PFEJ, a project devised by one individual was able to achieve something that Japan Red Cross ——who received contributions of more than 330 billion yen—— could not.

    In 2014, PFEJ won the Golden Nica in the Prix Ars Electronica——the world's oldest and most renowned competition in contemporary media art, known as the Oscars of its field——because it was evaluated as a new organizational model. PFEJ won the Golden Nica in the digital community category, ——following in the footsteps of world-famous social systems like the WWW (World Wide Web), Wikipedia and WikiLeaks.

    I also named our system The "*Fumbaro Japan Model*" (FJM) because it became apparent that the system could apply to other crisis situations. In fact it was used in 2012 during the unprecedented rain disaster in Kyushu, and in 2013 during the landslide disaster on Oshima Island. We would like to propagate PFEJ as a support model system globally to empower further organizations and individuals who could customize the most appropriate elements of this project to fit their needs - but the model's general versatility is in the theoretical foundation: structural constructivism.

　　Some people may believe that Structural constructivism could be a useful theory for a volunteer project but not as part of a company's management or commercial activity. By contrast, in *Management Challenges for the 21st Century*, Peter. F. Drucker stated that full-time employees have to be managed as if they were volunteers. In order to motivate employees outside the fact they receive a salary, you need to movtiate them as if they were voluneers. If wages always motivated employees well, companies would only need to use this method and succeed - but as we know, this is not the case.

　　This paper illustrates that how structural constructivism, the theoretical underpinning of PFEJ, can be useful as a meta-theory for managing people and developing organizations in a profound way, ——through studying PFEJ's activities. Coping with such an unprecedented set of circumstances was made possible by structural constructivism, and this way of thinking could be a useful model to enable organizations to survive in this age of drastic change. This theory is a system consisting of dozens of Principles. This thesis focuses on the Principle of Method and Principle of Humanity.

## What is Structural Constructivism?

I have below explained a brief outline of the meta-theory, as most readers will not have come across this theory previously. Structural constructivism is an original and universal philosophy systematized by myself, Takeo Saijo. Academically, it is a meta-theory systematizing the accomplishments in academic fields such as E. Husserl's Phenomenology, H. Rombach's Strukturontology, F. Saussure's Semiology, Seiji Takeda's Phenomenological Desire Based Philosophy and Kiyohiko Ikeda's Structuralist Philosophy of Science. My book entitled "What is structural constructivism?: A system of principles in future generations of human sciences" was published in 2005.

　　In general, individual theories explain specific phenomena. For instance leadership theories explain how to exhibit effective leadership, management theories explain how to manage work effectively, marketing theories explain efficient marketing activities, and strategy theories explain how to develop strategic capabilities. But structural constructivism has no such limits. The meta-theory works in a dimension different from individual theories and methodologies. Therefore, structural constructivism has been applied by many scholars in various fields including Organizational Behavior, Belief Resolve Approach, Medicine, Nursing Science, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Team Medical Care, Prevention of Infectious Diseases, Social Work, Psychology, Psychological Therapy, Philosophy of Science, Evidence-based Medicine, Qualitative Research Method, Research methods Theory, Education, and Social Science. As a result of this, over 200 academic articles and books have been published in Japan on this subject (including 20 books by myself).

## The Principle of Method

There are many Principles in this meta-theory, but this thesis initially focuses on *"The Principle of Method"* which is what drives PFEJ.

　　The Principle of Method asks the fundamental question "What is a method?" It attempts to make the essence clear. It sets out the most important points found in all methods without exception. In this context "Essence" means the key points particular to each case. "Principle" means a general definition including essences relevant to all cases.

　　In "method" case, the Principle of Method is defined as "a procedure able to achieve its objective in specific circumstances". We inevitably use method in certain circumstances. In addition we call the way that we accomplish our objective, "method". In other words, according to the Principle of Method, "the effectiveness of a method depends on two points: the objective and situation". For example, when we want to dig a hole in the ground, using shovels could be a good method. As another example, when we want to change fluorescent lights on a ceiling, standing on a chair or a ladder could be a useful method. We cannot judge the value of a method without also considering objective and the situation.

　　Most people think they know "methods", but they don't understand "Essence of Method", so they can't utilize methods effectively and flexibly. Generally, we learn a method from a senior or teacher in accordance with a specific procedure. The more you use a method, the more likely you will be convinced of its effectiveness. One tends to think that this method is the only right way to proceed and regard using the method as an objective. But there is no universally correct procedure suiting all circumstances. As a result of this, many organizations tend to simply follow precedents and this invariably causes a disagreement around methodology.

　　Moreover there are an enormous variety of methods in each field, so needless to say we cannot master all methods, but we can master the Principle of Method. If we apply methods according to this Principle, they can be used to greater effect.


### The Principle of Method in Practice: How to Construct a Unprecedented Method

PFEJ began with an emergency supply project. The huge tsunami devastated the coastal areas, in particular the Tohoku region. In such emergencies conventional top-down administration systems did not function adequately. To cope with these demanding circumstances I immediately constructed structures that connected supporters with victims' needs, with reference to the Principle of Method.

**Grasp the situation**　　The first thing I did was visiting the area with my friends to distribute necessary supplies and assess the aid situation. We realized that supplies were not reaching to small shelters and people living in their damaged houses. Although requirements varied according to their different circumstances, many survivors could use cell phones, and parcel delivery services were on a gradual recovery trend. This was the **situation** I observed after

visiting and assessing the affected areas.

**Devise a method**　We immediately made a website to publicize the needs for the minor or unofficial shelters and linked the website URL to my Twitter account. On the website we were able to update information in real time, so I requested donors to inform us about their donations immediately. As soon as needs were satisfied, it was announced on the website and this avoided imbalances in supply. All supplies requested on the website were delivered within 24 hours. Moreover, as soon as survivors needed new supplies, they could inform us by using their cell phones. This made it possible to cope with meeting requirements which constantly changed from one minute to the next. In this way, we combined existing infrastructures into a new support system which could deliver supplies directly to the right people in the right place at the right time.

**Achievement**　As a result of our actions, over 1,000 shelters scattered over a wide area were given continuous support within a few months and the supply system eventually realized more than 35,000 deliveries in the first year. Furthermore we utilized Amazon's "Wish List" system. Donors bought supplies on the Wish Lists, then the items immediately were sent to evacuees. In total more than 55,000 items such as chain saws, bicycles and home appliances were donated from around the world. This system is now utilized by the Animal Rescue Teams (As of June 2014).

An additional benefit was that since supporters sent supplies with their names and phone numbers on their delivery boxes, survivors knew from whom they had received the goods, which enabled them to give thanks directly. Supporters were able to understand the severity of the situation and how much their help was appreciated, through direct contact with the survivors. This connection often motivated the supporters to further action including some who started their own direct support outside of Fumbaro. Donors never forget those acquaintances made in the affected areas.

### Isn't "The Principle of Method" Obvious?: How to Propagate PFEJ in Affected Area

You may think that the Principle of Method is obvious, but most leaders and organizations are not conscious of it they therefore tend to follow precedents. In reality many local governments and administrations could not cope with the unprecedented disaster due to inflexibility in their response. For instance, the board of education for Miyagi Pref. implemented reshuffles of teachers as is normal according to custom. Unfortunately, this meant that surviving students were separated from their teachers in 20 days following the disaster. As a further example, necessary supplies such as blankets, clothes, underwear and food reached the shelters, but they were not distributed immediately, because the quantities were below the level needed for equitable distribution according to local government rules. For the same reason, a lot of fresh

food spoiled before being distributed. Furthermore, soon after seeing PFEJ's success, we suggested that local governments should adopt our system, which would enable donors to supply relief to the survivors directly. But the local governments didn't and as a result, distribution of relief supplies was compromised, when they should have been improving the survivors' quality of life.

It was impossible to visit all the thousands of shelters in Tohoku. To cope with this dilemma I initially spread information about how to deliver supplies effectively, for example by only assisting smaller, less publicized shelters. In addition, I shared the Principle of Method on the website and my blog so that volunteers visiting affected areas could act appropriately on the spot. Nobody knew all the circumstances in the affected areas such as temporary shelters moving or closing. Therefore volunteers visiting the affected areas had to make judgment calls based on their assessment of circumstances on the ground at the time. Moreover, I put the Fumbaro brochure on the website so that anybody could download it and requested the volunteers taking supplies to distribute the brochure, to enable survivors to contact Fumbaro directly, which many did.

We often think that we have grasped the overall situation, but in reality we haven't. For instance, in the middle of April (2011), a major telecommunication company developed an iPhone based system to distribute relief supplies. The system's objective was correct, but they didn't grasp the reality on the ground which was that few local people had an iPhone or could operate an iPhone well, so the system was not used by survivors at all. As Peter F. Drucker said that a performance does not relate to expenditure. If you don't grasp the fundamentals of the situation adequately, your effort and expense could be wasted with objectives not achieved.

The Internet is very useful to gather information and it should be utilized, but it cannot be a universal method——actually it did't work in devastated area——just a convenient tool. It is dangerous that regardless of the reality, you could assume to be grasping the situation adequately as with the major telecommunications company. Only using the Principle of Method could you observe the effectiveness of the method varying depending on the circumstance and objective. This enables you to be sensitive to the circumstances changing on the ground. Within PFEJ, sharing the Principle of Method has helped volunteers to make judgments on-the-spot and realize their aims autonomously, while grasping the situation appropriately and not losing sight of the mission.

Furthermore we implemented "The Mass Supplies Project". Various localities around the country wanted to send supplies donated by citizens but were unable to do so due to the lack of storage facilities in the affected areas. PFEJ was able to match supply and demand with over eight hundred tonnes supplied using hundreds of trucks. This demonstrated that it is more difficult for organizations to practice something which in essence is obvious.


**What Prevents an Organization from Changing?: Home Appliance Project**
Despite many saying "flexibility is very important", why don't many organizations practice it? A

key phrase for finding an answer to this question is "lever of sunk cost". They are costs which have already been incurred and thus cannot be recovered such as expenditure, resources and time. Therefore the longer your organization operates, the more its sunk costs increase. As a result, organizations inevitably tend to become afraid of failure and avoid risk by changing methods. This is true of every organization. For example, at first the Fumbaro project had no sunk costs, so it was easy to act without being afraid of failure. Now it has enormous sunk costs including the hundreds of thousands of volunteers' effort and time, so more mature decision making is required with regards to management.

Especially, formal organizations such as governments spending tax tend to avoid taking risks. A "Flexible response" sounds good, but what is the difference between that and ad-hocism or opportunism. The answer is "validity". We need a new framework which can ensure validity of new methods in organizations with increased sunk costs. The Principle of Method is useful as a framework. Sunk cost based decision-making focuses on the past, not the present and future. This is the reason why organizations focused on sunk costs unconsciously make illogical decisions. In contrast, the Principle of Method based decision-making focuses on the present and future, since it shows that the effectiveness of a method depends on "present situation" and "future goal". Therefore staff developing a new method can show that the new method is more effective than the precedent, and shows that we should not understate this Method, which is essential for reasonable decision-making.

Though it may sound obvious, it is essential for organizations and leaders to not lose sight of their original mission. For instance Japan Red Cross did not distribute household appliances to the survivors who went back to their own half-destroyed houses, but did to the survivors living at temporary houses. They should not have determined the distribution according to where the survivors lived. It was clear that they had lost sight of the original objective――supporting all of the survivors no matter where they lived. To fill this unreasonable support gap, we started "*The Home Appliance Project*" in which we collected and distributed home appliances, donated mainly from the Tokyo area. In summer many electric fans were needed. It was very difficult to collect thousands of such appliances. To cope with this situation we developed a new method. We set up a special E-commerce website which could deliver home appliances purchased by supporters and as a result, we delivered around 6,000 to survivors.

When winter arrived I decided we had to develop a new method to support survivors scattered around Japan, as private information protection laws prevented support to those who had left the devastated area. To cope with this situation I proposed a new method in which we put an announcement in nationwide newspapers and other media, requesting survivors to send a copy of their "Disaster Victim Certificate" and to let us know what kind of heating appliances they needed. With this unprecedented method there was the risk that requests would exceed the budget we had collected and actually some expressed dissent in PFEJ. My response was as follows: PFEJ's objective is not to avoid failure but to support survivors, so if we use all of the contributions I will call for further contributions (which I did). In the end, this new method made it possible to deliver heating appliances to over 13,000 family units around the country.
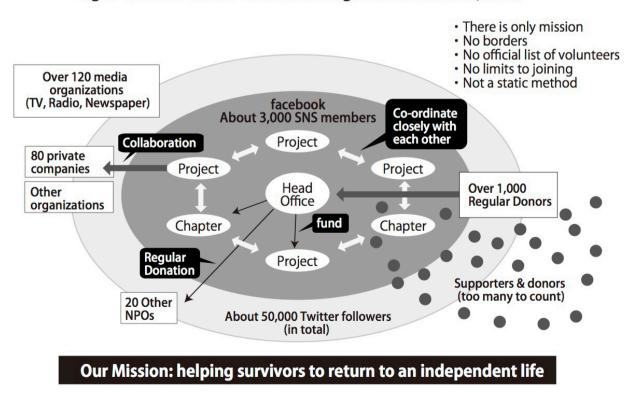
In this way, we could flexibly develop new effective methods without being limited by precedent. As a result of this, including the heating appliances, the Home Appliance Project was successful with 25,000 affected homes receiving home appliances.

In another example, in the early phase after the disaster, many survivors who had lost their houses and workplaces were forced to live in shelters day after day, surrounded by large amounts of rubble. With this in mind we started "*The Heavy Equipment License Project*" aiming to help those who lost jobs get a license to use heavy equipment, so they could find a job clearing rubble or to use it for re-construction. This project supported more than 1,000 local survivors to obtain a license to operate heavy equipment. In this way, applying to the Principle of Method, we realize various types of effective projects with rapidity.

### How to Construct a Functional Organization
### : Mission Based Borderless Organization

It is effective to devise structures which don't depend on precedent. For instance, we deliberately did not develop PFEJ into an officially incorporated non-profit organization. Instead, I adopted a borderless system as the organizational structure (Fig.1). We have no official list of volunteers, though we have a head office with a director and senior members.

**Fig.1   Mission Based Borderless Organization** (as of July 2014)

- There is only mission
- No borders
- No official list of volunteers
- No limits to joining
- Not a static method

Over 120 media organizations (TV, Radio, Newspaper)

facebook About 3,000 SNS members

Co-ordinate closely with each other

Collaboration

80 private companies

Other organizations

Project

Project

Project

Head Office

fund

Chapter

Chapter

Project

Regular Donation

20 Other NPOs

About 50,000 Twitter followers (in total)

Over 1,000 Regular Donors

Supporters & donors (too many to count)

**Our Mission: helping survivors to return to an independent life**

Our system using SNS serves to link around 3,000 supporters from all over Japan and the world. This borderless platform system enabled anyone from other organizations such as private companies, NPOs, and governments to join our project. As a result, there are various types of volunteer workers in PFEJ such as businesspeople, full-time home workers, medical workers, artists and crafts people, educators, scientists, technicians and media personnel, who contribute to the maintenance, management and development of the project using their respective skills.

In this way, PFEJ became the largest community in Japan by co-ordinating multi-skilled volunteers in many groups, collaborating with over 80 companies and donating to over 20 other organizations such as NPOs. Over 1,000 supporters around the country donate to PFEJ regularly. We are not an NPO as everybody works without pay and all donations go to the devastated region.

Most vertically-segmented administrative systems tend to lose sight of their primary mission and end up with rivalry among departments, reducing the overall effectiveness.To eliminate vertically divided administrative dysfunction, I encouraged volunteers to be involved in more than one group as a result almost all members worked on several PFEJ projects. This enabled all projects and chapters to co-ordinate closely with each other. For instance, we distributed home appliances and attached encouragement letters and Kizuna cards which allowed survivors to inform us of their needs such as psychological support, legal aid and educational support.

## How to Accomplish Missions Avoiding Preposterous Situations
## : The 5 Percent Theory

It is considerably important to define the mission clearly because it is a key criteria for decision making and acting autonomously. I defined our mission as "helping survivors to return to an independent life", not just "to support survivors". If we stick to the definition "to support survivors", then excessive support or dependency could prevent survivors from living independently. I also announced that PFEJ's ultimate goal was to eventually dissolve the project, after accomplishing our mission.

In addition to the Principle of Method, I devised and implemented "*The 5 Percent Theory*" which accepted a low level (around 5%) of mistakes and criticism of the Fumbaro project. If volunteers were afraid of these small mistakes and criticisms, we would have to spend huge amount of energy avoiding them and many volunteers would inevitably lose sight of our mission. Other support organizations behaved as if they were competing for market share, according to usual business practice. In order to avoid such a preposterous situation, I emphasized that other organizations with the same aim were all peers not rivals in support activities. Whoever supports, supports. Thus, we regularly donated to dozens of other organizations which were not part of Fumbaro project. If we really do not lose sight of our mission, we are free to find any number of ways to accomplish it.

## The Principle of Value

"*The Principle of Value*", the core principle of structural constructivism, is more fundamental than the Principle of Method. People make judgments about everything including "This method is better than that method". This demonstrates that the Principle of Value has almost unlimited versatility.

The Principle of Value is defined as "a value emerges according to one's intention, interest and desire". For instance, if you are interested in achieving social success, it is important to spend time earning money and achieving high social status. By contrast, if you are interested in a family life, it is important to spend time giving your family lots of love. This means that value is not intrinsic, but emerges according to one's subjective intentions. This may sound simple but it isn't. Rather, it needs to be strictly observed, as I will discuss later.

Academically, this Principle was originally defined by Seiji Takeda, a historical philosopher, as "The Desire-correlativity" in 1994. He originally formulated the Principle thorough Nietzsche's "Will to power" and Heidegger's concept of " Care" in his ontology. I reformulated the Principle as *Intention-correlativity* through Husserl's "Intentionality". The Principle of Value is its application of this Intention-correlativity (Desire-correlativity).

The Principle of Method includes not only objective but also situation as a key point, because it is essential for the Principle of Method to achieve it's objective. By contrast, according to the Principle of Value, value depends on aim (intention). Judging value doesn't require realizing it, so the Principle of Value doesn't include situation as a key point.

There are people knowing the Principle who say: "It just uses technical words, simply put, you must do what you want others to do, and you must not do what you do not want others to do". However, it is wrong. "You should do what you want others to do" is not universal because you and others have differing concerns. People believing this tend to adopt intrusive behavior and it could work negatively - such as a mistaken kindness, an unwelcome favor, a white elephant. Rather, the Principle of Value can be said to be methodological perspective to precisely implement "looking from the other's standpoint" .

### The Belief Resolving Approach
The Principle of Value is very effective to resolve "*Belief conflicts*". How to resolve belief conflicts using the Principle of Value is explained below.

### Step1: Identify Your and Others' Interests
Belief conflicts occur even in a circle of individuals sharing the same mission such as PFEJ. For instance, there were some objections to the Home Appliance Project. When we initially implemented the project, a volunteer living near an affected area suddenly called me and said angrily "We must not implement the project!". What would you say if you were in my position?

You must not think "What is wrong (or right)?" and you consciously have to stop this way of

thinking (E. Husserl named this kind of thinking "Epoche"). Ask yourself "What differing thought processes make myself and others have conflicting ideas about the value of the project?". Crucially, you should identify your opponent's concerns through dialogue. Therefore, I asked her "What makes you convinced about that?" and tried to identify her concerns through conversation. As a result of this, I understood that she was afraid that unequal distribution may cause criticism and conflict among survivors.

### Step2: Devise Compatible Methods

I understood that being criticized and causing confusion were her main concerns. Thus, one could ask "How can these interests be compatible?".

I explained that our mission was to support survivors, and we had no way to stop this project, but her concerns would be noted. I suggested a compatible plan which addressed her concerns: regarding a shortage of home appliances. Firstly, I didn't announce in advance the distribution of home appliances and secondly, I prepared back-up supplies. Thirdly, when we distributed the supplies, I explained that we were not government personnel but volunteers, and all home appliances were donated by citizens. As a result of this, she accepted the alternative plan and agreed to assist with the project, and she consequently became one of our local leaders.

### Step3: Introducing the Principle of Method

If you cannot devise a compatible plan, you should adopt a better plan taking into account the objective and the situation. For instance, the Heating Appliance Project was criticized for damaging local household appliance retail businesses. This criticism sounded reasonable; but was it? Some critics had a vested interest in supporting local commercial activities and that was important - but did they understand the priorities in an emergency? Many hundreds of thousands of survivors lost all their home appliances suddenly and our project simply replaced those. In addition, people who were able to purchase new items had already done so. In these circumstances, which should be the higher priority?——distributing necessary supplies to survivors, or supporting the sales of a few retail outlets? I think that the latter didn't have first priority according to our mission of helping survivors to return to their independent lives. Thus, we implemented the project but we supported local commercial activities with other projects. It was important to remember that different projects had different objectives.

As described, you can cope with conflicts of belief utilizing "*The Belief Resolving Approach*" based on the Principle of Value and the Principle of Method. Only this approach makes it possible to consciously resolve conflicts of belief.


### What's a Policy Overcoming an Innovator's Dilemma?

Many managers who have read up to this point may think that structural constructivism is a theory attempting to explain the essences of method, theory and leadership, thus allowing them to maximise achievement. But this fundamental meta-theory is not so simple. The Principle of

Value means that we cannot avoid judging values based on our intention, interest, desire, or objective. Fundamentally speaking, as humans we always have the potential to make incorrect judgments and thus, the possibility of pursuing a wrong aim. So, what happens if we relentlessly pursue this incorrect objective?

For instance,　many companies adopt slogans such as "we will accomplish our goals without fail", and such slogans appear reasonable. In one such company with this policy, managers endorsed personnel incentive such as bonuses or promotions. Managers motivated staff by setting varying but achievable targets. Because the majority of targets were reached each year, managers were convinced their policy was right. A few years later, however, the product became obsolete and nobody could achieve the targets, so the company fell into decline. Why did this happen?

Everyone avoided risks in this changed environment and did not try to innovate. The belief that all staff had to achieve these targets caused risk-averse attitudes and such a rigid policy caused critical failure. Innovator's Dilemma written by C. Christensen demonstrated that managers tend to select the most efficient strategy for the time, but later when an innovation impacts the market, companies which don't adapt inevitably fail——especially in business fields undergoing drastic changes.

So, what should they do? Essentially, "achieving objective" is a very effective target for management. But, as it is not a universal method, in reality intensive implementation of achieving objective could cause critical failures. This is a fatal pitfall into which bright and rational managers tend to fall. We equally could experience such incorrect policies, thus, paradoxically, we should not use one policy intensively, rather consciously leave room for spontaneity. Only spontaneous policy can be universally effective in leaving room for pursuing alternative opportunities.


## The Principle of Humanity: Emotion Can Prevent Changes

Humans are a part of every organization thus if we adopt　"*the Principle of Humanity*", we can manage organizations appropriately. All humans have concerns about being accepted by others. In other words, each person wants to be accepted by others without exception. This is one of the Principle of Humanity and I also call it "*The Principle of Affirmation*".

SNS enables people who live far apart from each other to join various projects, but it is quite difficult for people to communicate with others whom they have never met in person. This was a specific issue causing difficulty on SNS. The following negative comment was written without warning on a Facebook group page : A) "I have some doubts about your plan". This caused the following negative reaction: B) "Who are you? You are rude, aren't you?". A) "I was just trying to advise you! Are you nuts?" B) "No, you are nuts!". These conflicts never produced constructive results and people following the coversation grew very tired. I therefore devised some lessons based on the Principle of Affirmation enabling constructive communication and shared

instructions, for example, "First you must accept others, then you can make suggestions or ask questions" or "Don't forget to say thank you", to all SNS members.

If humans have no emotions, it is like dealing with machines; thus when you find a fault or a weak point it is wrong to point it out without advice or encouragement. If a manager constantly points out a subordinate's defects, their self-esteem will drop and they will not be motivated to improve their faults.

In fact this Principle is the most useful one for me to manage PFEJ. Emotion could prevent an idea from being accepted as a good one. Keeping members' self-esteem high is necessary for people to accept the Principles explained on this paper and behave reasonably to achieve their aims.

### The Essence of Thankfulness and Points to Remember

Giving thanks is essential for all people and organizations. On the contrary, managers tend to take it for granted that staff will work well and staff tend to take it for granted that managers pay their salaries. But they are wrong because there are innumerable staff who don't work hard and managers who cannot pay salaries thus causing serious financial trouble. We unconsciously become a condition taking it for granted (Symbolically we take it for granted breathing smoothly). Leaders working hard tend to criticise subordinates not acknowledge them. Remember that all people want affirmation, so subordinates' motivation might fall to a low level by such criticisms –especially in volunteer organization where they can drive away volunteers.

Thankfulness has multi-affirming functions. When we are in the condition of being thankful to others, we feel affirmed. In addition when we thank others, they also feel affirmed. When we receive a salary we are glad, and in the same way, when we are being thanked by someone we feel happy. In this way, we can manage thousands of volunteers. An organization satisfied with gratitude is an ideal one!

But, you should not use affirmation purely as a method to control people, ——while managers unfortunately often misunderstand the use of this. Because people are able to detect this, the original meaning of the acknowledgment is almost lost. People want to be accepted, not controlled. This is true in other cases, according to Servant Leadership, leaders who serve subordinates in the most genuine way can gather the most support. But if you serve subordinates strategically just to be seen as an effective leader, they will detect your true intention and will not regard your behavior as being honest.

### Conclusion: Not Knowledge, but Belief and Practice Make You Change

If you apply these Principles of structural constructivism to any given situation, you will become able to employ more appropriate management, leadership, development, and can more

effectively accomplish your mission. These essential Principles make your thoughts clearer and your actions more appropriate and effective. In this sense, structural constructivism can also be called "*A Principle Based Practical Philosophy*".

It should also be noted that there is a difference between understanding the Principle and applying it. It is extremely effective to read and discuss this thesis with all members and consciously use them in everyday discussions, for example, "According to the Principle of Method, this is a better plan than the precedent" or "We should stop using this strategy, and change our organizational structure taking into account this change of circumstances". As a result of this, the organization will be able to function efficiently and adapt flexibly to variable situations, without losing sight of the mission.

When we felt completely defeated after the complex disaster, I reached a belief which initially wrote in my blog as follows: "We can never regard this tragedy positively. However, I like to believe that the disaster has made us stronger if we can use the experience to create a more peaceful society. It is the aim we should strive to achieve, and I will do my best". This belief encourages me to implement unprecedented projects, being not afraid of change.

If leaders, managers, practitioners, researchers, administrators and politicians could apply this theory to their respective fields and could improve their communities, I would then feel my mission has been accomplished.


## An Additional Note and Acknowledgments

# Profile

## *Takeo Saijo*

Director, Project Fumbaro Eastern Japan (PFEJ). Visiting associate professor, the graduate school of commerce (MBA), Waseda University. He specializes in philosophy and psychology (Ph.D Human Science). He systematized a universal philosophy named "structural constructivism" in 2005, and has published 20 books such as *"What is structural constructivism?"* and *"What is qualitative method"*, etc (Books in Japanese only). He is from Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture which is where he lost a relative to the tsunami and devised a new support system called "PFEJ" utilizing a number of Social Networking Servise and Structural Constructivism. In addition he investigated why 74 students lost their lives at Okawa Elementary School with reference to his original qualitative method named "Structural Construction Qualitative Research Method". The brochure *"Be Survivor: Lessons Learned from Okawa Elementary School"* based on this study was published in English. He will continue studying organizational behaviors based on structural constructivism and publish related books. Those who are interested in his studies, please contact following address.
Email: info@akademeia.jp.net

## *Project Fumbaro Eastern Japan*

"*Project Fumbaro Eastern Japan*" (PFEJ) is a new support model which was constructed by Takeo Saijo to cope with the unprecedented disaster after the March 11th (2011) massive earthquake hit Japan. The system made it possible to make 35,000 deliveries to more than 3,000 temporary shelters and temporary housing. PFEJ consists of over fifty groups of different sizes and purposes such as Study aids for kids, Teaching traditional Nuno-Zouri, Horticulture, Handicraft, Animal Rescue Team, Resilience Support Projects, Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima. About 3,000 SNS members in the Facebook group maintain and assist PFEJ voluntarily. In 2014, PFEJ won the Golden Nica in the Prix Ars Electronica which is the world's oldest and most prestigious competition in media art. This means PFEJ is following in the footsteps of famous social systems like the WWW (World Wide Web), Wikipedia and WikiLeaks. Project Fumbaro Eastern Japan will be renamed and restarted as Fumbaro Fund in September 2014. Please contact the following URL if you wish to give support.
http://wallpaper.fumbaro.org/en/contactus