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Developing Sustainable post-Pandemic Agile Working Model: Managing Paradoxes through Collaborative Intervention and Reflection

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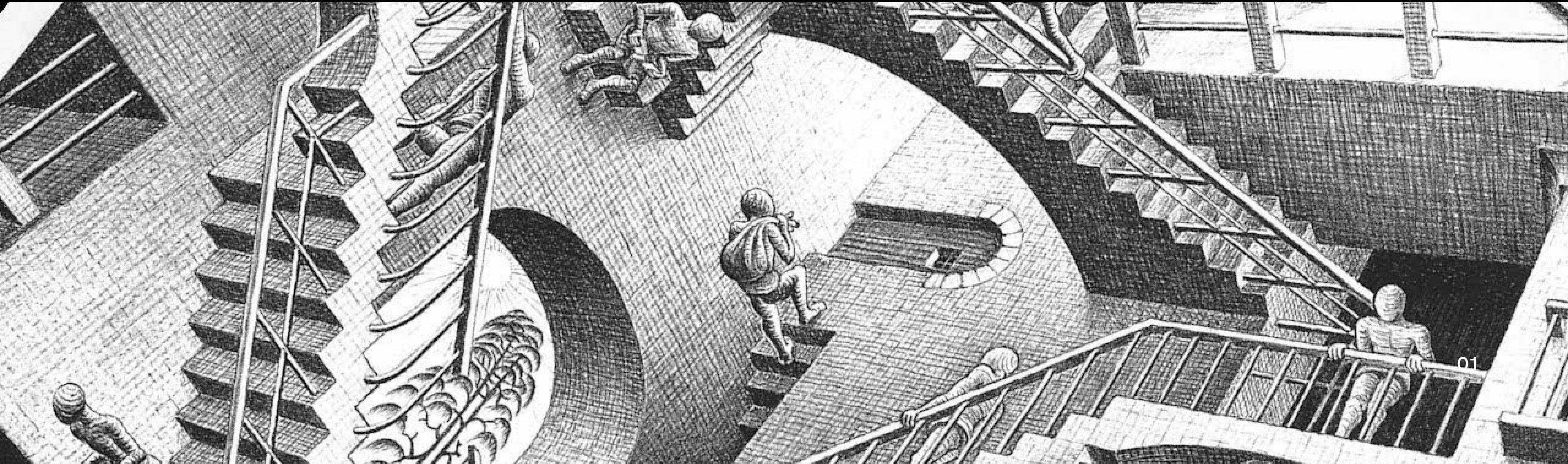
Presentation program

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Principal topics

01	02	03	04	05	06
Post-pandemic scenario	Developing Agile Working Model in a PA	Case study	Negotiating Meanings	Managing Paradoxes	Discussion and Conclusion

Massive and widespread adoption of flexible forms of working (Ker et al., 2021)

Without universally accepted definitions (Athanasiadou, Theriou, 2021)

Possibility of building long-term sustainable flexible working arrangements

Achieve a respectable improvement not only of the work performance but also the worker's empowerment and well-being (Babapour et al., 2022)

Post-pandemic situation as a "clean state"

Introduces the opportunity to co-construct a completely new work arrangement coping effectively with uncertainty and responding to external solicitations to meet the organizations cheanging needs (Chia, 2017)

Developing Agile Working Model

Agile Working (Grant, 2020)

"a way of working in which an organisation empowers its people to work where, when and how they choose - with maximum flexibility and minimum costrainsts - to optimise their performance and deliver 'best in class' value and customer service. It uses communications and information technology to enable"
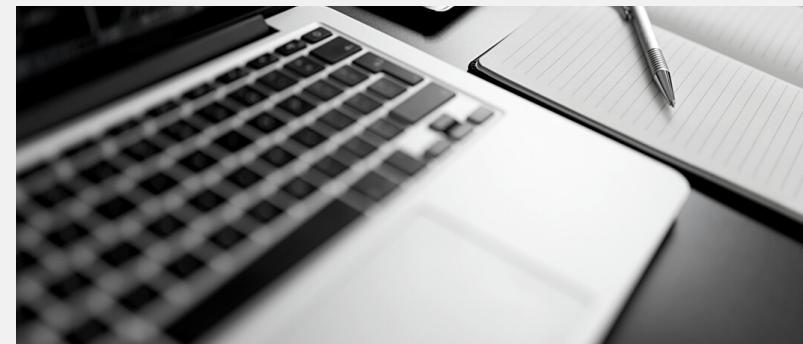
Agile work require equally agile organization

When developing agile working arrangements, the whole organizational system is involved in this transition, at different levels and dimensions all impacted simultaneously adding complexity to the process.
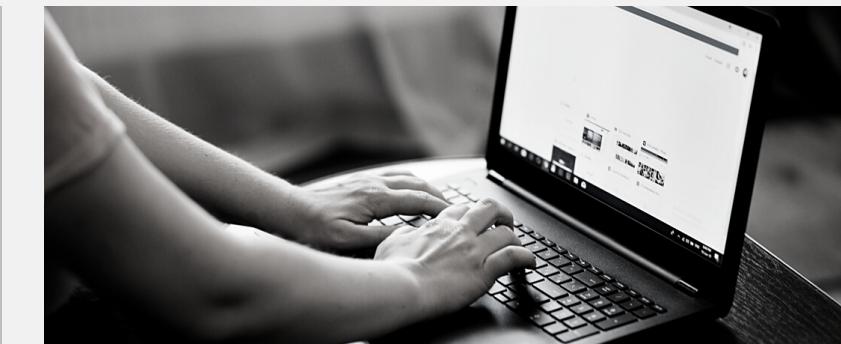
Should be interpreted as a multi-authored arrangement

Take place through generative and productive dialogues
(Tsoukas, 2009; Thomas, 2011)

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Case study

The developing of sustainable post-pandemic agile working arrangements in a Regional Public Administration in Northern Italy.

01

Creation of the change leading coalition

02

Analysis of existing work practices

03

Definition of the implementation strategy

04

Planning and first operational steps

05

Small-scale implementation and monitoring

06

Dissemination to the whole organization

Negotiating meanings

Resolve conflicts through generative dialogue

In the case study emerged that the 'Agile Change Group" needed to be interpreted as a wide range of engaged actors that:

- negotiated meanings (Hardy, 2005; Weick, 2005, Thomas 2011);

- adresses the several path dependencies dynamics (Sydow, 2009);

- manage the tensions associated with the trade-off and paradoxes (Lüscher, Lewis, 2008);

- gradually develop a consensual perspective via social construction dynamics (Weick and Quinn, 1999)

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Managing paradoxes

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Standardization vs Customization

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Organizational control vs Employee autonomy

—

Performance vs Well-being

—

Bureaucratic procedures vs Individual discretion

—

Individual management vs Group management

—

Prescription vs Open dialogue

Discussions and Conclusions

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Agile work in Agile organization

Sustainable agile working arrangements are twinned with an agile organization.

Reflect critically

Agile working arrangements developed under the pressure of the emergency situation often suffer lack of thoughtful planning.

Manage Tensions and Paradoxes

The success of the implementation of a Agile working arrangements is strictily related to this point.

Think Antifragile

Pandemic has created significant learning opportunities to capitalize.

Fight Trivialization

Trivialization, unable to grasp the nuances of reality, risk leading to simplicistic and dangerous gaze on complex questions.