



BRIEF FOR HR AGENCY MAYBE

Causal Map and Qualia: a back-end for values-driven organisational work

For Gabriele and Fiona first

This is a rough idea: we partner with a consultancy in the HR or organisational development space who already has the clients, the framework and the trust. They do the advising and package it inside some supercool systems/org-development voodoo. We are the engine underneath.

Linking Qualia and/or Causal Map like we did for the British Academy and VIB in Belgium, which worked well. But we are a small, fairly quiet bunch. We are not selling this widely, and we are not the loudest voice on what the analysis should mean. A partner who brings a strong point of view on organisations could carry the front end, while we do what we are good at.

The brief below is something we would adapt for different people. see what you think.

The brief

Where we are

Causal Map Ltd builds two tools for understanding organisations based on what their people actually say. We believe that employee narratives and stories, whether gathered purposefully via targeted interviews or otherwise, are a great insight into hearts and minds, conscious and subconscious, across an organisation.

Qualia is an AI interviewer. It holds a real conversation with each employee or stakeholder, at scale, and gathers their accounts in their own words. Each person follows a link and chats with Qualia in the browser at a time that suits them. Qualia usually asks a few open questions and then probes, following up on whatever the person raises rather than working through a fixed script. Rating scales and predefined answer options are possible but not part of the main process. the output is a set of transcripts in which people explain how they see their work, their team and what causes what.

Causal Map reads those accounts and maps the causal claims inside them: who says what leads to what. Every link traces back to the source text, so nothing is invented and every finding can be checked. If someone says "the new rota means I hardly see my children, so I come in tired and make mistakes", Causal Map codes that as a chain: new rota → less family time → tiredness → mistakes. Coding every interview the same way gives one combined map of the organisation: which beliefs are widespread, which belong to one team only, where the management picture and the shop floor picture diverge. Click any arrow and you see the quotes behind it and who said them.

The two work on their own or together. Qualia can feed any organisational development workflows or methods you already use. Causal Map can read interviews you have gathered any way you like. Used together they form one pipeline, from conversation to evidence, we have shown they work (separately or together) for organisations.

What this surfaces

This is closer to ethnography than to a staff survey. A survey hands people the consultant's categories and asks them to rate each one, so whatever did not make it onto the questionnaire stays invisible. We start from open conversation and let the categories emerge from what people say.

What emerges is each person's mental model of the organisation: what they believe causes what, where they see the levers and the blockages, what they think would actually change things. These models are mostly tacit. People act on them every day, but nobody has written them down, and they often differ sharply between the boardroom and the corridor. Mapping them makes them visible and discussable, in the speakers' own words rather than in anyone's preconceived framework.

The piece we are missing

We are strong on elicitation and analysis. Causal mapping has a long research tradition behind it, and we have plenty of ideas about how to analyse mental models in general.

What we do not have is the organisational development front end, and that splits in two. First, the memorable theory: the named approach with the catchy diagram that a client can hold in their head and repeat to their board. Cynefin has its domains, Lencioni has his pyramid; we have a rigorous method but no story to sell it with. Second, less cynically, the craft of being useful: we do not really know how to write the report, run the workshop or open the process that turns a map into something a real organisation acts on. We are back office. That is the missing link we are looking for in a partner.

What we are open to

We are open to working with a partner who brings the client relationship and a clear point of view on organisations, and who uses our tools as the analytical back end. You advise your clients your way. We give you a rigorous, traceable read of what people in the organisation are telling you.

The kind of partner we have in mind

Ethical and values-driven. The work should serve both the people and the organisation, for example around work life balance, culture or wellbeing, rather than purely squeezing more output from staff.

Small or boutique. Roughly the scale where you are looking for an edge in this space.

At ease with causation or systems. You may already think in terms of feedback, loops, drivers and outcomes, or you map systems. Causal mapping fits most naturally with that language.

Willing to build a method with us. The interesting prospect is co-developing an opinionated, repeatable procedure, your named approach to reading an organisation, built on our tools, rather than buying software

off a shelf. This is the missing piece: you bring the theory and the client craft, we bring the engine.

What a first step could look like

A short conversation to see if there is a fit, then a small joint pilot on one of your live cases, so both sides can judge the value before committing to anything larger.