Chapter 3
Enterprise Immune System

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a framework for understanding enterprise immune system, which is based on the outcome of the author's study on organizational change and response to the change in 415 manufacturing and non-manufacturing firms. The immune system includes a large number of systems and sub-systems of complex nature. It focuses on the functions of an enterprise immune system—the adaption function and prevention function. The adaption function permits the change to enter into the enterprise system but the prevention function does not allow to enter. This text indicates that the immune system has two dimensions—constituents and typology. The constituents part consists the principal determinants of an enterprise immune system architecture and the typology part divides enterprise immunity into two part—intrinsic immunity and extrinsic immunity. Two suppositions—intramural and extramural—are in effect in the process of developing enterprise immunity i.e. intrinsic immunity is developing intramurally and extrinsic immunity is developing extramurally.

Enterprise immune system architecture is a configuration of system and complex of beliefs held by the stakeholders. The configuration is supposed to be multi-layered being active in detection, prevention and protection functions of an enterprise. It detects the self and non-self-elements; prevents non-self-elements from entering into the system and complex of beliefs; and fights

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the non-self-elements to protect the self from the non-self. The configuration can be innate also known as inborn and adaptive also known as acquired.

Communication (connection) between the units of an enterprise is explained by ordering (command and control) as well as reporting (complain and accomplishment) systems. The systems and complex of beliefs involve in the communication—ordering and reporting—concerning the fundamental functions of detection, prevention, and protection. Enterprise coordination mechanism is making the innate system more straightforward and easy to understand that which elements of the architecture are receptors of the changes and which elements are effectors to the changes. As an organization continues with its functions in this straightforward way, eventually, it develops immunity to the systems and complex of beliefs.

The structures, systems, predispositions, and the set of organizational forces acting as components of an enterprise's immune system suppress or resist the change initiatives. Because the immune system resides at the interface between the enterprise and its environment, it serves as a first line of defence, but more broadly as an information processor of the enterprise. An enterprise's memory functions are fundamentally open, and thus immune theory should describe how immune system architecture permits, and then responds to, open information flow as a primary function. So, if (enterprise) immunologists are to decipher the complexities of the immune system's organization, then immunity must be characterized with this open, more holistic consideration of immune regulation that includes environmental inputs, the processing of information, and the regulation arising from responses to this larger context (Zalta, 2010).

Enterprise immune system consists a large number of systems and sub-systems because an enterprise itself is considered as a system within a system. An enterprise is a sub-system of its industrial system. Enterprise's system also consists a number of systems like production system, accounting system, financial system, information system, administrative system, and so on working together to form an enterprise system. For an instance, accounting system is concerned primarily with recording and reporting cash and kinds, financial systems is concerned to the sources and uses of funds, information system is concerned to the accumulation and dissemination of information. Enterprise immune system is primarily concerned to the changes in all the sub-systems and systems in order to maintain the status quo of an enterprise.