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Your Organisation Doesn't Care Who is Managing It

# MANAGE WITHOUT THEM

A Market-Based Approach to the Management of Firms

Technology-Enabled Markets  
Collaboration, Joint Ventures  
Operationalised Change

The Blog  
The ManageWithoutThem Model  
Technology Enabled Business Transformation

[About the Site](#)   [Newsletter](#)   [Matthew De George](#)

Not Anti-Management... Pro-Governance!

Not Anti-Planning... Pro-Architecting!

Not Technocratic... Anti-Luddite!

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WITHOUT  
THEM**[Blog](#) | [Articles](#) | [MWT Model](#) | [Technology-Enabled Business Transformation](#)[About](#) | [Matthew](#) | [Contact](#)

## Technology-Augmented Markets

Technology-augmented markets are the 'why' of technology implementations. This component of the MWT Model provides purpose, direction, and insight into [technology-enabled business transformation](#) projects. Implementation of an information system which doesn't also transform management practices into a highly transparent market-based approach will not longer deliver competitive advantage.

The types of technologies currently being deployed to manage procurement and spend management are only the tip of the iceberg. Information technology solutions which provide for both market-based optimisation and demand forecasting (not just planning) will dramatically strip waste from organisations over the next 5 - 10 years.

## Collaboration Architectures

Collaboration architectures reintegrate management with the rest of the organisation. Architecting your way to better collaboration will dramatically improve governance and decrease delivery risks. Your project plans will be smaller, easier to manage, and better aligned with your delivery resources. Well architected organisations and projects practically manage themselves. The agility of your organisation will also be improved as collaboration architectures are reused and managed as strategic assets. See also, The [New MWT Hierarchy](#).

## Operationalised Brands

Brands are about promises to your clients and customers. They are about setting the standards for what to expect when people are dealing with your organisation. The trap is that the more time your marketing department focuses on setting expectations in the marketplace the more your organisation will have to live up to those expectations.

Operationalising your brand will help you keep those promises while at the same time streamlining decision making. To use [Chris Macrae's](#) phrasing your brand and the values it encompass will become the 'primary horizontal organising mechanism' of your organisation.

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### The MWT Model

In Development - See also: [Core Components](#) / [About](#) / [Articles](#) / [Services](#) / [Core Concepts](#) / [Resources](#) / [Posters](#)

ManageWithoutThem is market-based management for the firm. Far from an organisational *laissez-faire*, the ManageWithoutThem model forces organisations to be explicit about their values.

In such an environment management itself changes from planning, monitoring, and controlling to simply 'what collaborating individuals share'.

The ManageWithoutThem model provides a framework for operationalising a corporation's brand to become its primary horizontal organising mechanism. This brand has a higher authority than any particular manager, organisational structure, or process.

Through ManageWithoutThem IT value is realised by focusing implementation of information technology towards the creation of markets.

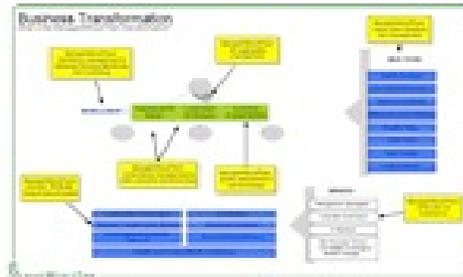
Management itself becomes redefined as operationalised brands + technology-augmented markets.

By focusing on **organisational culture**, **organisational design**, and **organisational usability** (a ManageWithoutThem term) the ManageWithoutThem principles build a framework in which management can be distributed without the risks often associated with a distributed

### Related Links

[Core Concepts](#)  
[What is ManageWithoutThem?](#)

### The MWT Transformation



### Old 2002 Vision



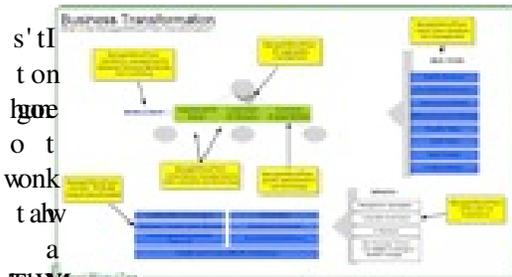
management model.

ManageWithoutThem is a **responsibility-based** model of organisational control. Bureaucracies and supervision based control ideas are replaced, for key practices, to allow for self-organisation and market responsiveness.

In fact, if you're not using ManageWithoutThem principles in your organisation, you are not getting the full value out of all the talent you are recruiting, the diversity your recruitment policies are creating, your partnerships with other organisations, or the experience of your long-term employees.

Future content will also focus on **How to Lead People Who are Managing Without You.**

The MWT Management Transformation



organisation looks like, you have to know how to make the transition from what your organisation currently is to the MWT Model.

Thankfully, this transition is embedded right in the MWT Model itself. By injecting a diverse set of existing disciplines into your organisation's management model, and changing the specific day-to-day activities performed by managers, you will be able to manage a the transition with minimal risk and maximum benefits.

Click the image on the right for a overview of the transformation.

#### Become a Contributor

If you would like to show your expertise and contribute to ManageWithoutThem.com by publishing an original article please [contact us](#). Use your contributions to complement your business's own web site by linking to your web site from each article published.

Articles will be accepted for publication at the sole discretion of ManageWithoutThem.com.

#### Services

We are working on related [service offerings](#) to complement the ManageWithoutThem principles. Through these service offerings you will be able to accelerate the adoption of ManageWithoutThem principles into your organisation. If you can't wait, and would like to start adopting ManageWithoutThem principles right now, please [contact us](#).

We are also looking for **software development partners** for the development of innovative information systems which will allow you to better run your organisation on ManageWithoutThem principles (by coordinating distributed management).

#### About Us

You'll learn more about the ManageWithoutThem players as time goes by. We think it's only appropriate that we say something useful first. You can always email and ask for further information at: [info@managewithoutthem.com](mailto:info@managewithoutthem.com) or on the [Contact Us](#) page.

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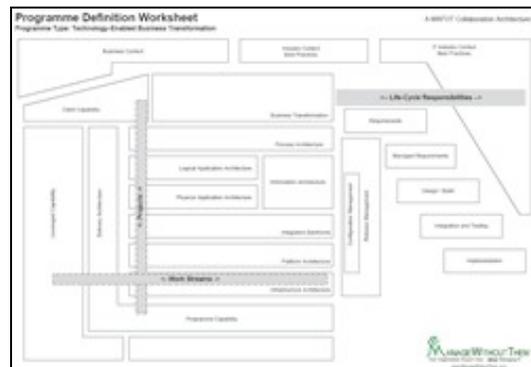




### Technology-Enabled Business Transformation

Technology-enabled business transformation programmes fundamentally change business or customer facing processes through the introduction of new technologies.

The important part of this definition is that the particular types of processes which are enabled by these programmes could not exist without the technologies involved. This is important as it means that it is often not possible to use the common systems engineering process which places 'business process' conceptually before 'system requirements'. In a true TEBT programme these concepts are peers.



In true technology-enabled business transformation programmes either business processes and/or systems must be considered candidates to solved process requirements. The TEBT collaboration architecture (first introduced [here](#) with more in development) takes this into account.

The TEBT collaboration architecture also recognises 'technologies' in a more general sense than just software development. In addition to software development technologies, software packages, and software components, the TEBT approach can also include 'technologies' such as new management metaphors and market-based analysis constructs.

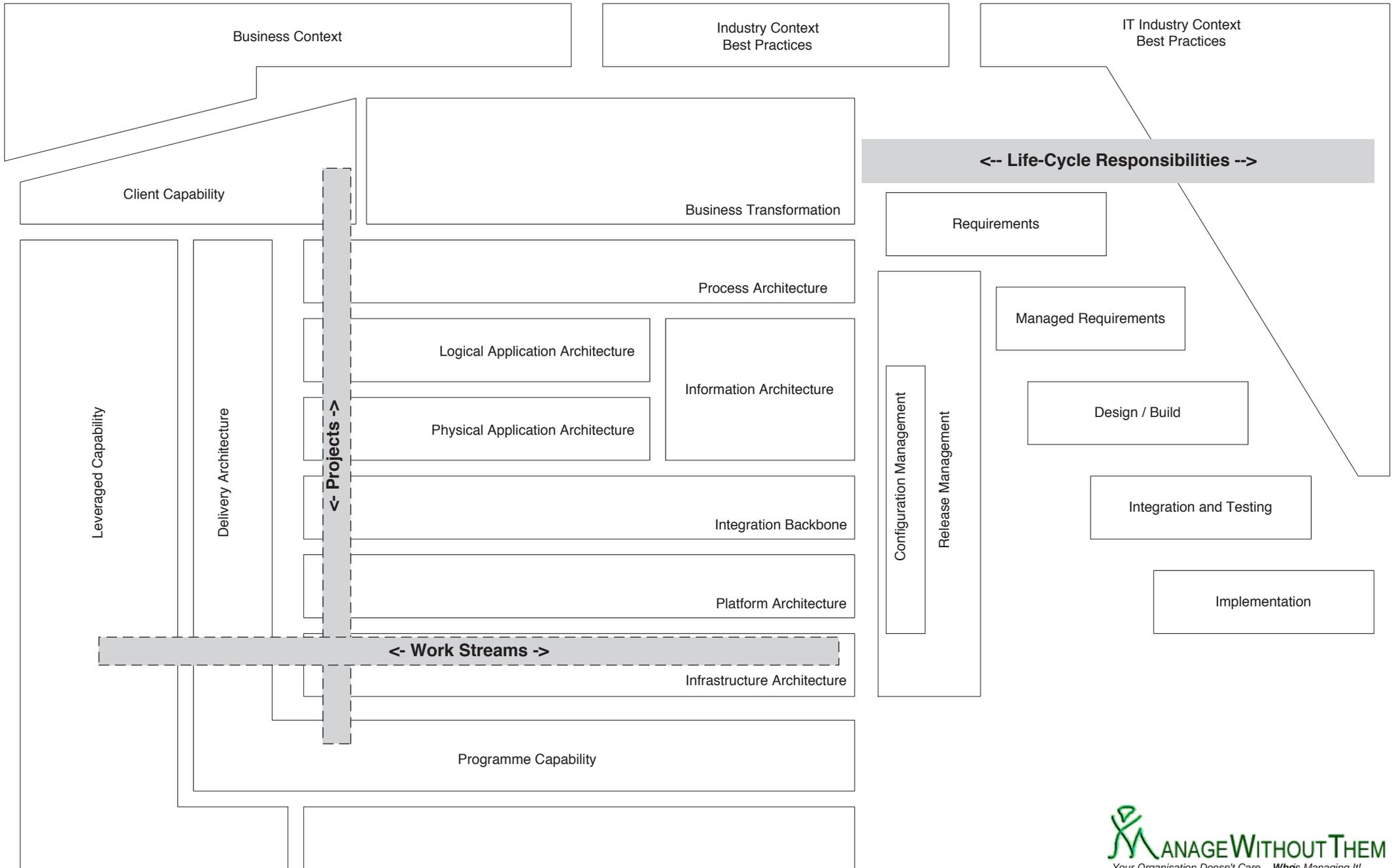
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# Programme Definition Worksheet

Programme Type: Technology-Enabled Business Transformation

A MWT/IT Collaboration Architecture





Matthew De George  
**e-Business Consultant**

Matthew is the creator of the ManageWithoutThem management model and the founder of ManageWithoutThem.com.

He has 10 years experience in the information technology industry; consulting and delivering **technology-enabled business transformation projects**. He specialises in leading medium to large-scale enterprise projects with uncertain and changing business requirements, and which involve custom development, systems integration, and business transformation.

This experience has provided numerous opportunities to examine the nature of organisations and management from the perspective of a system. Integration of this experience with wide-ranging interests in areas such as **Austrian Economics, Capitalism, Brand Strategy, General Management, and Evolutionary Science** lead to the development of the ManageWithoutThem model.

He holds a **Bachelor of Information Technology** from Queensland University of Technology and has completed courses in **project management, customer service, negotiation, strategy**, and a variety of **enterprise information technology products**; just like everybody else has. He indefinitely deferred from his MBA before it was too late.

He continues to independently develop the ManageWithoutThem philosophy and is currently writing the first **ManageWithoutThem book** which introduces the model.

Matthew is based in Sydney, Australia. He has also worked in Adelaide, Brisbane, and Hong Kong. He is slightly embarrassed that this is written in third person.

#### Related Sections

[Matthew's MWT Blog](#)

[Matthew's Personal Blog](#)

[Matthew's Links Blog](#)

[Book in Progress](#)

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## Current Articles

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### Organisational Epistemology

It is often suggested that 'planning' is the most important management tool. I was confronted with that opinion within another online management forum recently to which I drafted the following (edited) response.

### Intellectual Capital Markets

All would agree that intellectual capital is an important and hot topic. But before we assume that the best approach to managing IC is to centrally measure it and then plan, monitor, and control lets explore the alternatives.

### The Amateur Parent

After a week with my son (from a previous marriage) I now have time to post another article. It may also be that I need to fill the void of his absence by writing something; or that without his visit there would be nothing to write at all. What can an amateur parent tell us about leadership and collaboration?

### Seamlessness is Bunk!

Don't let technology vendors fool you. Want Enterprise Integration? Want to organise your company around your customers? Want to deliver customised product and service offerings? Then start building seams; delineate to integrate.

### Managing At, Managing Within, Managing Out...!

The ManageWithoutThem philosophy derives much of its power from radically distributed management. However, its premise is beyond that: ManageWithoutThem recognises that even without encouragement, people 'manage'. If your employees are not 'managing without them', what are they doing?

### Managerialism and Ownership

Corporate Governance is currently a hot topic. Rightly or wrongly, the stock-market is questioning the practices of some major companies.

### Evolutionary Stable Systems

This is a placeholder article. It will investigate the evolutionary biology concept of Evolutionary Stable Systems (ESS) as it applies to management and systems. If you want to get a head start trying Richard Dawkin's The Selfish Gene.

## Austrian Economics

### 7 Reasons to Like Austrian Economics

Menger, Mises, and Hayek were right. Here are 7 good reasons why you might want to look into Austrian Economics. The ManageWithoutThem economic lens is undoubtedly Austrian.

## Book Reviews

### A Great Place to Read

I've recently decided to try a new approach to my personal financial management. Namely, I'm going to spend less per week than my weekly disposable income. It sounds simple, and it has already paid off. Instead of buying a bunch of books I wondered into my local library to see what I could find.

### Collaboration

#### Epic Collaboration

Management could learn a lot about collaboration from the film industry. A bonus interview with Hans Zimmer, Musical Director for the film *Gladiator*, is contained on the DVD version of the film and contains some valuable insights.

### Core Concepts

#### The Incredible Shrinking Management

Changing to a distributed management model requires that 'management' have a change in perspective.

#### Organisational Usability I

If the effectiveness of your web site depends on its usability, why not use that model for your entire company?

### General

#### New Economy White Goods

Something to think about next time you're doing the weekend washing.

#### The Internet:

##### Anti-Capitalism or Hyper-Capitalism?

Legal battles like those between Napster and the record industry, or even books like The Cluetrain Manifesto may have started you thinking that the Internet is fundamentally against big business. Don't assume too much.

##### Quantum and Particle Physics

The difference between leading a ManageWithoutThem organisation and managing a traditional organisation is like the difference between particle physics and quantum physics.

##### MWT Systems Framework

A framework for developing self-managing systems of all flavors. Be it self-managing web-sites, business models, or organisational designs.

##### 3-Point MWT Transition Plan

Wondering about how you might start your organisation's journey to a ManageWithoutThem operational model? We propose the following 3-point transition plan.

##### The Book of MWT

ManageWithoutThem may eventually become a book. By the time it is finished paper books may no longer exist – so watch it written right here on the web.

### Back 2 Basics for Management

ManageWithoutThem is not anti-management. The activities of an organisation simply must be coordinated. But if ManageWithoutThem is a new way of managing, what do we at ManageWithoutThem actually mean when we say 'management'?

### Management by Inspecting - Governance by Sampling

MWT is not an abandonment of everything you've learnt. In fact, there are some clues to effectively 'managing without them' in the Quality Assurance discipline. However, you must apply the discipline as a tool of governance, rather than just a tool of management.

### Beyond Attitude

The state of management has become so muddled that there is now, apparently, no such thing as appropriately refusing to 'play well with others'. Surely, there are some 'others' that you shouldn't have to play with at all? Isn't defining that part of the responsibility of the management system?

### 'I'm Not a Technology Person'

There is a phrase I hear that fills me with rage. It's not the words themselves but what I now understand them to mean. The phrase is 'I'm not a technology person'.

### PMs will thank me: Anti-Anti-Management I

A number of people have suggested that ManageWithoutThem is anti-management. I normally counter their arguments by just saying MWT is a different type of management and not the absence of management. But there are other arguments.

### Finally. The Big Picture

I have often lamented that management has become the art of saying 'You're not seeing the big picture' even when there isn't one. I came across a reprint of a 1999 Harvard Business Review (HBR) article which attempts to provide the necessary tools for drawing those 'big pictures'.

Incomplete

### In Defence of Rationality

This article is not yet complete. It will introduce the economic definition of 'rational'.

Introductory

### What is Manage Without Them?

For the first time visitor, or as a quick refresher. This article outlines the main features of the ManageWithoutThem distributed management philosophy. It provides an introduction to the main axioms that we are challenging and the core concepts that we propose to replace them.

Learning from the Past

### Historic Innovation

Chris Macrae is a 'Brand Charterer' – he is the master of 'open-source branding'; brands that work from the inside out. His approach aligns every specialist within the organisation to the organisation's Unique Organising Purpose – and he does

this with brand. Sounds revolutionary, but – no offence, Chris, I love your work – I think I've heard some of it before.

## Managing Intangibles

### Beyond Single Point Management

In embarking on E.business initiatives and corporate re-organisations, most companies have been quick to create roles that ensure they 'manage' such intangibles as: knowledge, communication, and relationships. But while they have been quick to change **what** they manage, most organisations have been slow to change **how** they manage.

### James Joyce and Jack Welch

James Joyce, author of Finnegans Wake, Dubliners, and Ulysses, doesn't know much about people or cities; or at least not by the standards of the average modern organisation's recruitment mentality. But what can we learn from him...?

## The Vague and the Damned

### Values, Context, and Competence

Continuing our discussion of what, in reality, really manages an organisation; we question the conclusions born from an approach that combines the evaluation of performance with the creation of the context in which decisions and actions are made.

## Topical

### Reconciliation and MWT

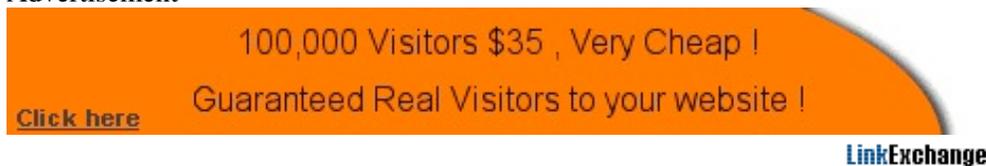
Nelson Mandela and Rubin 'Hurricane' Carter understand the importance of individual responsibility when undertaking social change. Do you?

### IDC Directions2001

After attending a recent IT industry event I have to ask myself: why do we need analysis to tell us basic principles of economics?

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Organisational Epistemology

Organisational Epistemology

The insistence of the importance and priority of 'planning' as a separated management function is, I believe, not only misguided but also disturbing.

As it is pointless to condemn one idea without trying to replace it with another I started thinking about what I thought the most important management function might be.

I think the most overlooked and powerful management tool is philosophy – more specifically the establishment of the organisation's epistemology. Establishing organizational culture and the philosophy of your team's design are the most important management tools. Establishing the organisation's knowledge structures is equally as important and could be plausibly designated as the Organisational Epistemology.

If philosophy is taken as an important management tool, then the most important thing for managers to consider is the office politics - though that might sound ridiculous at first.

I don't mean politics as in the groan-inducing bureaucracies and pseudo-intellectual sparing that usually gets referred to as the office politics. I mean the forces that are maneuvered within the organization to get it to respond in order to get things done. When those forces are filling out forms, nepotism, deceit, and fear that is more specifically bad politics.

In effect the philosophy and politics of your team make up the epistemology of the team or how the team thinks and what rules and constructs it uses to expand instructions or goals into actions. The group's epistemology also controls how the group might absorb and integrate new knowledge.

Just like the most powerful way to change and improve the performance of a single individual is to change their epistemology, the most powerful way to change or manage a group is through the epistemology of the group.

By changing the way the group absorbs and integrates new knowledge you are improving your teams ability to adopt and grow.

Managing the philosophy of the group better allows the individuals of the group to convert the goals and market opportunities presented to the group into action. Setting the philosophy of the group is the only way to be sure that people are doing what you'd like - even while you're not their.

Don't get me wrong; individual planning and strategic thinking are vitally important. But the idea is to encourage these activities in the individuals within the group. This way the management function is

distributed as it rightfully should be.

Planning shouldn't be the main drive of the management process. With planning as the main drive of the management process you are forced to have hierarchy based organisations.

The only way that the planning process can drive the management of the group is for a higher-up manager to know (at a high-level) what needs to be done for the entire project (for example). This invariability requires the input of staff under the manager. The result is either 'committee planning', which is never optimal; or the inappropriate separation of the planning function up to the 'them' of management which reduces the individual responsibility held by the rest of the team.

Planning and hierarchy based organisation structures are deeply intertwined.

I believe that corporations do a great deal of planning and that it hasn't helped matters. Far too much planning and in a non-distributed way.

I believe that the planning taking place in most corporations actually interferes with the individual level planning and strategic-thinking taking place at the front-line. Interfering, that is, with the planning which is likely to be more accurate and more in tune with customer needs or improvements in operational efficiency.

By still clinging to the illusion that failures are the result of lack of planning people are holding onto a strategy that hasn't been working. The managers of corporations have been planning for years, and exulting the merits of planning like good MBAs. But when all this planning doesn't appear to work it is always suggested that the planning wasn't done right this time - not that driving the management process from the planning function was a flawed concept to begin with.

By merely claiming hypocrisy or incompetence in management's planning you are holding on to the idea that centralised planning is the answer, and that while it fails time and time again to produce repeatable high-quality results, that it will somehow be a success this time, or next time, or one time soon, when it is finally done right. The reality may be that it can never be done right and that the reliance on planning is based on a fallacy.

Also, by separating the planning function up to managers, you remove the planned and strategic thinking from the day-to-day business levels operating at the front line. In the same way that in separating responsibility to a manager you unwittingly remove the responsibility felt by those involved in the day-to-day business.

(note to myself: this article is a mess - rewrite)

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## Intellectual Capital Markets

### Intellectual Capital Markets

The tendency to first measure, then analyse and interpret the condition of an organisation's intellectual capital to determine its value is an assumption of best practice based in a centralised management paradigm.

It's likely to be incredibly difficult to measure the true value of intellectual capital from a centralised management perspective. While it is perfectly acceptable to claim that there is latent intellectual capital within the organisation, the true value of such capital cannot be determined until an attempted is made to use that capital and the results of its use can be measured.

When managing intangibles such as knowledge, value, intellectual capital, etc it is important to see the organisation as an economy. For management of intangibles, more than ever we must recognize that the organisation is inherently managed in a distributed manner; where each participant is managing in that each participant is thinking and making decisions.

If the organisation is viewed as an economy we can learn lessons from economic progress in general. Just like traditional economic capital is only possible because of the existence of basic property rights; perhaps intellectual capital can only exist as an extension of basic rights of intellectual property.

Just like so-called under-developed countries cannot utilise the economic process of capital because they are lacking the basic infrastructure of property rights (ie. title deeds, contract laws, etc) the organisation requires an infrastructure of intellectual property ownership and trade.

Distributed management and an organisation-as-economy view provides some insights into how organisational intellectual capital might be created, maintained, and leveraged.

If the concept of management itself is distributed then you cannot fall into level-of-analysis traps. For example, if your organisation wants to maintain intellectual property and grow and leverage intellectual capital then the individuals within the organisation must be allowed to do the same thing.

To effectively manage intellectual capital the organisation must build the infrastructure for individual intellectual property ownership within the organisation. Only after this infrastructure is established will the incentives for the trade of intellectual property and accumulation of intellectual capital exist.

What the individuals of the organisation have, the organisation itself will eventually have.

Conditions of employment and legal constructs will continue to dictate who actually owns the organisation's intellectual property but operationally the system would work very differently.

The internal reward systems and trade mechanisms may not be strictly financial. Appealing to employees' pride, reputation, and values (or, better still, those values preferred by the organisation) may be a more appropriate mechanism for individual trade and acquisition of 'wealth' within the organization.

How does this shed light on the measurement of intellectual capital? As I said, actual measurement is likely to be incredibly difficult. That said, the same infrastructure required to establish individual intellectual property rights and trade within the organisation will also allow for better measurement. Measurement should not, however, be the primary purpose of the infrastructure - it should be geared to the more fundamental aims.

How will shareholders interpret all of this? How will shareholders gain confidence in the value of the organisation's intellectual capital? Shareholders are getting more intelligent - just as markets are becoming more intelligent. They will understand the inherent difficulties of measuring the true value of intellectual property and capital. What's more, they will be weary of organizations that claim to have accurate measurements.

In short, shareholders will have more faith in the system and the values employed than the measures themselves. The framework for intellectual property ownership will become part of the brand of the organisation itself.

The system will be seen as evidence of an organization that is obviously collaborating in new ways; but, without easy answers and reassuring quantification of the value of intellectual capital only the organisation that establishes trust with all its stakeholders will be able to pull it off.

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## The Amateur Parent The Amateur Parent

I was lucky enough to spend last week away with my 5 year old ('nearly six!') son, David. Pre-occupation with my visit was amongst the reasons I haven't posted an article recently. Another reason was that I've been falling in love.

Now, as my son returns home to his mum and new father, and the insecurities of a new relationship are starting to fade, I've started thinking about ManageWithoutThem again.

I have only spent a limited amount of time with my son over the last few years. This situation is improving and has largely been by choice. I am lucky enough to have a good relationship with my ex and still have a great deal of respect for her.

Just as importantly, I think my son's new dad - my wife's new husband - is an impressive man. I see an integrity in him; and in many ways he seems a lot like me... only a little better at it, perhaps. :-)

What has this to do with leadership and collaboration? Well firstly, last week was hard work. Last week, through a collaborative effort with my partner and family, we were looking after David during every waking hour.

However, as I reflect on the week I realise that it was harder work than it needed to be. I often complain that new managers tend to do too much; and I was doing the same thing with David. Despite helpful advice from my ex-wife that he was perfectly capable of dressing himself, for example, I continued to button shirts and tie shoes.

Like the enthusiastic assistance of a new manager, this busyness and 'helpfulness' was much more for my benefit than David's. Not only did I enjoy the belief that I was assisting in some way - being a good parent - but if the ritual of over-assistance was in any way necessary it was so I could learn what David could and couldn't accomplish himself.

But anybody in a similar situation will know what's going to happen now. I'll get a friendly call from my ex next week to gently inform me that David appears to no longer be able to tie his shoes. My assistance, much like the meddling of a first-time manager or the worst types of processes, ruined some of the lessons David had already learnt.

More interesting was that while I say the over-assistance was important for myself, when the time was right it was my son who informed me that 'I can do that' and established the boundaries of assistance as required by his skill levels – which he was best able to judge.

I, as amateur parent, however, had the monopoly on values. While the boundaries of collaboration were set by David when it came to specialised skills, I had much more unquestionable authority when it come to issues of values.

As a good parent we are always available to assist and teach to meet any of David's needs. But the issue of whether a temper tantrum is an appropriate response to not being allowed to own any toy that one can touch, is an issue of values and hence the parent's domain.

Such 'authority' however can never come for free. Parents must always accept the responsibilities which are naturally associated with their monopoly on values. The only way that we as parents (or as leaders) are able to stand behind the authority of values is if these values are openly communicated and agreed by the entire family over time.

That is to say that considerable time and effort must be devoted to discussions and questions of values. However, this is time well invested. As 'values capital' builds, it can replace the effort required in direct intervention.

I'm fond of the quote from Alfred North Whitehead which appears in New Ideas from Dead Economists that 'Civilization advances by extending the number of important operations which can be performed without thinking about them'. 'Values capital' reduces this thinking and intervention.

In my case I had to try to make some of these values explicit in my head as I was, in many ways, taking the lead from the values already in place in David's new family. It is the overlap in these values that made the entire process easier.

Don't get me wrong; I was able to make my own positive contributions. For example, David appeared to be eating better by the time he left. David has had a number of health problems which have effected his appetite. Any improvements (if they remain) are perhaps because I didn't pay as much attention to his eating that David's recent health problems had dictated that his family pay to it. Again, it was in the reduction of certain types of assistance that the situation improved.

So called 'perennial' organisations have gotten a bad report from some people over the past few years. The recognition that an employee's relationship with an organisation is not as permanent as it once was has caused many to reject a parent-based model for the relationship between organisations and employees.

I think to reject the parent-based model entirely doesn't give credit to parents and their efforts to improve their parenting. We have learnt that being a good parent means being your best self rather than building a co-dependence with your child. We have learnt that being a good parent means providing support and encouragement. We have also learnt that being a good parent means conversations about values. We have learnt that being a good parent means giving freedom and respect to individuals while giving them an environment that protects them and allows them to experiment.

Perhaps good leadership is still very similar to good parenting after all.

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Thanks David, Sara, Sarah, Andy, Mum, Dad, Melanie, Emanuel, Chrisi, Nicolas, and Graham.

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**Seamlessness is Bunk! Seamlessness is Bunk!**

I've been threatening to do this for a while now. Threatening to expose one of my most loathed words in the world of business. That word, as you may have guessed, is 'seamless'. Seamless in the way that middleware vendors will deliver 'seamless business integration', or supply chain software will deliver 'seamless supply chain integration', or how a consulting company will allow you to work 'seamlessly with your clients'.

In my experience in the IT services industry I have specialised in systems integration projects. These are projects when you integrate two or more information systems to form an end-to-end business process. These projects are never just about technology – they are always business process projects, or they fail.

Seamlessness may be a way of viewing the end result of an integration project; but the actual implementation is about building the right seams, in the right places. Systems Integration is about finding the common ground between the systems to be integrated. Better still, it is about finding the common ground between classes of systems to be integrated, and therefore allowing components to be more easily plugged-in in or unplugged from the integrated system.

Away from information technology, let's look at dress making or making shoes. Who wants seamless dress-making? The design of a dress, its beauty, its shape, and its utility are derived primarily from its seams.

While it may be possible to construct a shoe or a dress without any seams it would take very sophisticated machinery and would result in a throw-away product. What happens when you own seamless shoes and suddenly the sole wears out? Do you have to throw the shoes out? Or do you finally concede and build a seam?

ManageWithoutThem is about distributed management and the transformation of all management systems from top-down, single-point management to operationalised brands and technology-augmented markets. More importantly, however, the

ManageWithoutThem model is based on the fundamental connection between management and the division of labour. With the division of labour comes the division of knowledge. As specialisation increases, detailed knowledge gets distributed throughout the market. Specialisation is okay – everybody specialises – even so-called 'generalists' are specialists.

In a ManageWithoutThem organisation management is primarily about brand and structure. Build the right seams (and the right mechanisms for continuous improvement) and that's what manages the organisation.

Delineate to Integrate!

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Managing At, Managing Within, Managing Out...! Managing At, Managing Within, Managing Out...!

People have goals; they plan, they act, they make decisions, they learn what it takes to succeed or survive in their environment.

Perhaps they don't want to maximize success; perhaps they want to minimize frustration. Either way, in the sense that all individuals in the organisation act or make decisions (at some level), all individuals in the organisation manage.

At the most basic level all employees choose what emails they read and when they do or don't raise an issue to their supervisor. These small decisions, multiplied, can significantly effect the outcomes of the entire organisation.

Even without the context of an explicitly ManageWithoutThem organisation it is a fallacy to think that within your organisation some people manage and some people don't.

If your employees are managing without you, that is, they are following the ManageWithoutThem model, they:

- Manage themselves as their own business with its own value chains, intellectual capital, brand, clients, suppliers, partners, etc.
- Always judge the value that they contribute and their competencies in the context of their clients (internal or external), and their position in the value chain and their global organisation.
- Utilise technology and shared services within the organisation to economise and promote growth
- Understand the organisation's operational brand architecture and align with both the highest-level organisational brand and that of their business unit

Most organisational leaders would agree that these are admirable goals, however, some may still be reluctant to let employees 'manage without them'. Perhaps they should consider the alternatives:

**Not Managing...** Employees who are Not Managing are not thinking (and increasingly not performing as you business environment becomes more complex). They are relying on others to make their decisions for them. Not Managing is in many ways the antithesis of ManageWithoutThem.

Not Managing supposes that thinking can be separated from doing and that the metaphor of an organisation is an all thinking head with an all acting body. This is clearly not the case...

Many employees who are now Not Managing have probably been encouraged to adopt this approach because of problems in the organisation's culture and values.

As frightening as Not Managing sounds, perhaps this alternative is less common than you think. Perhaps the other alternatives are more common.

**Managing At You...** As a leader, you will have a particular style of work. Employees will learn your idiosyncrasies from experience and from discussions with other members of your staff.

Over time an equilibrium develops. Your staff know what you want to hear, how to minimise frustration, how to maximise success.

This reminds me of a recent article on TechRepublic advising on how to ensure budget requests are successful (i.e. approved). Not that they are aligned to the strategy of the organisation, simply that they are 'successful'.

The direct consequences of 'managing at you' may be inaction and change resistance. In the long term this approach could hamper innovation. It will also significantly reduce the organisation's ability to work with other leaders, other cultures, other partners, etc...

Staff who are managing at you are probably your intended managers of the future. Is this really the type of leadership your organisation wants?

**Managing Within You...** Not everybody is managing at you. That would be a rather cynical view of the workforce. However, managing within you can also occur when your staff see their leaders as the be-all and end-all of their context.

Staff who are managing within you don't have customers, they are not part of a value chain, and they aren't trying to improve their own competencies. That is unless you tell them to. They only have a boss. You are their leader, they will do everything that you say but only what you say nothing more.

**Managing To Fool You...** Not everybody want to progress their career, or impress their boss. This group certainly isn't after a promotion into your job. This folks simply want to get you off their back...

**Managing To Survive...** These people don't even want to get you off their back. You can annoy them all day if you want; as long as they still have a job at the end of the day. They just want to survive another day in your miserable company... (as they probably see it)

**Managing Against You...** There is a rare breed that is independently forming a successful sub-organisation, a successful sub-business.

But are they building the business you want? You may never know. These group may well be having a positive effect on your bottom line; until they leave and go work somewhere else.

Perhaps you should change your organisations strategy to match theirs perhaps you shouldn't where are they, again?

**Finally...** (okay, so this list is certainly incomplete)...

**Managing Without You...** this is self-management specifically for the purpose of getting the work done. This is self-management with a complete context of customers, your global organisation, and value chains.

Optimise your organisation - that is, increase its organisational usability - for the people managing without you. They are a mini-business, operating within a collaborative environment to service your organisation's market. These people utilise the other individual businesses within your organisation as their preferred partners.

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## Managerialism and Ownership Managerialism and Ownership

Corporate Governance is currently a hot topic. Rightly or wrongly, the stock-market is questioning the practices of some major companies.

Part of the debate is around executive ownership of shares and options. Some suggest that it gives rise to a situation where it makes more sense for an executive to spend their time manipulating the stock price than effectively managing the organisation.

Managerialism has even been defined in terms '... that ownership and control in the large corporation have been separated, with effective discretionary power in the hands of the active management rather than stockholders...' - p9, Corporate Control, Corporate Power, Edward S. Herman, Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Of course, in the search for incentives, ownership has been re-tangled with management. Part of me doesn't have a problem with this but if you apply the MWT principle of ensuring you understand the purpose of what you're doing - you have to make explicit that the re-alignment of ownership and management, even for reasons of managerial incentives, is against purpose.

What is more important to consider is that the argument doesn't even have to center around the morals of executives. The question is merely 'do good managers and ownership-based managerial incentives and the stock exchange and the system of publicly owned corporations form an evolutionary stable system?'. That is, will good or bad managers tend to survive better under this arrangement?

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## Evolutionary Stable Systems Evolutionary Stable Systems

Check back for updates.

## Austrian Economics

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### 7 Reasons to Like Austrian Economics 7 Reasons to Like Austrian Economics

I consider myself a freethinker. I tend to form my own views on things and then search for established concepts to retrofit my thinking to. In this way I tend to lag a little when it comes to what I call things. To this end I think I've finally found my economics; and they are Austrian.

Austrian-school economics was started by Carl Menger in 1871 with the publication of his Principles of Economics. There it takes a few divergent lines, one through Ludwig von Mises (my introduction to the subject). This stream includes some famous names like F.A. Hayek (whom Mises mentored and who received the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Science in 1974).

The following characteristics of Austrian-school economics are of particular interest to the ManageWithoutThem model:

- Co-discovered (it was independently discovered by a number of people at the same time) 'subjective price theory' when everybody else was suggesting value was something inherent in the goods (or the factors of production). E.g. they were the first to say 'goods are worth what people are willing to pay for them'.

- Related to that; recognised the power of the consumer. We tend to say that technologies such as the Internet give more power to the consumer these days; but Austrian economics (Mises in particular) has always recognised the power of the consumer to make or break business and the implications for policy.
- Focus on Individual Human Action. As Dick Brown (CEO of EDS) says 'Individuals create value, not organisations'. The Austrian-school builds an economic model based on the fact the all economic value is the result of individuals acting. When individuals use organisations (not the other way around) Organisational Usability is competitive advantage.
- Following from a model based on individual human action the Austrian model also gets beyond the 'class struggles' that tend to come from Marxian type analysis (us and them, capitalists exploiting workers, etc). Austrian-school economics recognised the importance of time in economics and determined capitalists being paid interest on their contributions was because of time and the fact that we value goods now more than good with the same characteristics later.
- In Austrian-school Economics there is a single Production process. There are not separate Production and Distribution processes. Within organisations the analogy is a Management process and a Production process. E.g. one class of people working and another class of people telling them what to do, when to do it, how to do it, whom to do it for, etc. The artificial separation of Distribution and Production processes tends to direct analysis towards a centrally planned economic system and is against self-organisation.
- The Austrian-school is willing to accept conceptual frameworks more than historic evidence. This is because history doesn't really give any indication of causality. This is particularly interesting because it means their conceptual analysis is finely tuned and helpful in situation when you are trying to what has never been done before (and in business this is the whole point, right?)
- Finally, after they analysis with the above precepts they are very strong advocates of market-based coordination. ManageWithoutThem is at its essence a market-based co-ordination of the firm. So this is important.

If you want to learn more about Austrian Economics why not try the [Mises University 2002](#) audio files or Thomas C. Taylor's [An Introduction to Austrian Economics](#); both available at [Mises.com](#)

(<http://www.mises.com/audio.asp#MU01> and <http://www.mises.com/austecon.asp> respectively - for AvantGo users).

## Book Reviews

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### A Great Place to Read [A Great Place to Read](#)

Starting at the Economics section I drifted through economic history, economic encyclopaedias, criticisms and sermons, Adam Smith, 'Adam Smith's Mistake', 'Post Keynesian Economics', 'Pre-Mengerian Economics', Economists as saviours, Economists as destroyers of morals, Economics as a dismal science, social science, political science, and not-so-dismal science. All revealing a diversity of opinion, passionate debate, leaps of understanding, and popular misfires; precisely the stuff that propels innovations in thinking and advances in intellectual traditions.

It started me thinking about management. Does it have the same mixed-up history? Can we say for management that we can trace a rich history of passionate debate and, more importantly, popular misfires?

In some sense we certainly can. Just look at the piles of new management fads in the bargain bins of any bookstore. But all those theories seem built to be fads. The types of thinking that ends up in centralise-decentralise cycles and 'incremental improvement' verses 'leaps of innovation' debates.

When management has as mixed-up a history as economics we'll know we're getting somewhere.

As I drifted from the economics section to more general management books I came across a book that I'd never seen in my local bookstores - 'Great Place to Work: What makes some companies so good (and most so bad)'. It appears to be

hard to get but it is available from the author's consultancy web site ([www.greatplacetowork.com](http://www.greatplacetowork.com)).

Due to the nature of non-borrowing public libraries I was only just starting to flick through it when I had to leave; but one section in particular was excellent:

Author, Robert Levering, discusses 'how management gets in the way'. Levering goes through four popular theories of management, using the founder or archetypical personification of each style as examples, and explains how they all fail to effectively steer and coordinate the organisation; and how they perpetuate a separate class of management, all too separate from much of what is going on in the organisation.

The types are professional manager (exemplified by Peter F. Drucker), evangelical manager (Tom Peters), scientific manager (Fredrick W. Taylor), and psychological manager (Elton Mayo).

The most pages are devoted to Tom Peters. Indicating that he is the hardest to 'expose'. Which I'm glad of; the timing of Great Place to Work's publication means that the author misses Tom's more recent elaborations, and Tom is generally right.

Levering's discussion starts to uncover the fact that managers as a separate class are, by definition, ineffective in the steering and coordination of an organisation. We all know the best managers don't exactly fit any of these models at all; and that is precisely why they are effective.

Management is best thought of as a technology (more on this in a future article) rather than a profession or a discipline. All the value-added functions of management need to be examined separately and applied with the same discretion as any other factor of production. More importantly, we need to re-absorb the separate class of managers and ensure all our activities are coordinated.

## Collaboration

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### Epic Collaboration Epic Collaboration

Moviemaking is a world of big projects, big budgets, the coordination of hundreds (or thousands) of specialists, and whole companies created for a single project.

It is a world where the production company's logo appears first, but in the end the talent sells the show. In moviemaking, talent is recognized from directors, to actors, to focus pulls. In moviemaking, the creation itself rules, and you're only as good as your last project.

Making a movie may be an extraordinarily complex logistical exercise; but this does not stop the end result appearing as a purely creative product made entirely of brand.

Sure, directors and actors get most of the limelight; but during production, if you try to tell an assistant from the props department how to do their job they are just as likely tell you where to go.

Lessons from Hollywood's project and talent focus are often cited, but **the real lesson may come from the way the best in Hollywood manage creative collaboration in this environment.**

The Special Edition of the Gladiator DVD contains a bonus interview entitled 'Composing Gladiator'. Hans Zimmer, Musical Director for the film, discusses how collaboration occurred during production.

Zimmer describes the process as 'very collaborative' as opposed to a situation where 'everybody is stuck away in a corner

somewhere'.

Most managers would suggest that their business operates the same way - but could they match Zimmer's eloquent elaboration? - It's worth quoting in full:

*'We'd all be working together. Ridley [director Ridley Scott] would be sitting in this room, Lisa [Lisa Gerrard from Dead Can Dance] would be singing... We'd do one take and we'd turn around to Ridley and go 'What do you think?'*...

*'We never use the language of music. He never says 'can you do this?' and 'can we do that?'. We talk about the theme, we talk about the characters, we talk about the light, we talk about what we are trying to accomplish. We're talking about, 'if I do this here, how will it effect something... twenty minutes later?'... How can we set up tone... we're talking about aesthetics, we're talking about books we read, we're talking about other peoples movies. **Anything not to talk about the specifics of music, 'cause there's no point.'**' - Hans Zimmer, Composing Gladiator (emphasis added)*

As Hans suggests, the architecture of collaboration, in this case, is not music. One reoccurring theme of the ManageWithoutThem model is to **separate the architecture from the content**. For the Gladiator project, Hans is clearly responsible for the musical score. When he is working with the director, they are collaborating **around** other things (light, purpose, tone, aesthetics, etc.).

This style of collaboration shows the film industry's maturity in terms of creative collaboration. If business is to reap the benefits of a diverse and necessarily specialised workforce it will need to follow this model.

Effective management will need to facilitate the *collaborating around an architecture* approach. This will allow specialists to add their own unique value (be they information technology specialists, graphic artists, procurement specialists, etc).

I recommend the Hans Zimmer interview. Hans shows himself as a real and rare artist with a passion to live his 'one life' doing what he loves and doing it well.

(by the way - the adventure continues at [www.tayfundemiroz.com](http://www.tayfundemiroz.com))

## Core Concepts

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### The Incredible Shrinking Management The Incredible Shrinking Management

The Incredible Shrinking Management is a Core Concept of the ManageWithoutThem philosophy. We expect that further discussion and examples will appear in future articles. However, the following shrinkages are already starting to occur:

**Brand...** branding and marketing concepts are being continuously challenged in the so-called 'attention' or 'mind-space' economy. In terms of The Incredible Shrinking Management, the focus is on 'personal brand' versus 'corporate brand'.

For daily decision support it will often be just as effective to think in terms of 'how would this action help/hinder my personal brand?' than it is to think in terms of 'how would this action help/hinder the brand of the corporation I work for?'.

Tom Peters has become the de facto guru of personal branding... See his book the Brand You 50 in the Resources (Books) section.

**Customer...** while once the level of analysis for 'customer' might have been corporate or perhaps divisional. In a ManageWithoutThem distributed, service-based organisation each and every employee, department, process, etc will need to have a customer.

**Value Chain...** again, the level of analysis for 'value chain' might once have been corporate or perhaps divisional. The shrinking concepts of business, channels, and customer mean that consideration of the value chain is a day-to-day activity.

At the very least you should be able to draw a line from the work you're doing to your corporation's external customers to determine which direction the value is flowing and who your internal clients are. (remember; you don't necessarily draw the line through your manager – draw the flow of value directly)

**Business...** Remember ManageWithoutThem is not about creating control mechanisms, **it is about creating organisms that don't die**. The model for organisms that don't die (or shouldn't die) is a business. This means that every department, process, employee, or project must be analyzed in terms of it being a business.

Again Tom Peters provides the meat in this area. Check out his Professional Service Firm 50 book. It provides a framework for turning every department in your organisation into a professional service firm.

**Channel...** with every department (project, employee, etc) as a business you'll need to separate the channel from the process more than ever.

Sure, your department should have various processes that reduce operational risk or support change management - But, if somebody from another department requires your services they will request the services through a channel, not a process.

**Your (customer-focused) process must begin after the channel.**

**Strategy...** Strategic planning, as a separate function to the daily management and operation of your organisation, is dying a slow (fast?!) death.

Strategy itself, however, is more important than ever as both an approach to market and a coordinating mechanism within the organisation. (People must collaborate -around- something - the obvious choice is Strategy)

Shrink Strategic Management and you find Strategic Thinking. Strategy Thinking is a discipline, a perspective, and a state of mind practicable by everybody in the organisation. It becomes a framework for communicating strategy as well as forming it.

**The Incredible Shrinking Management** represents a change in the perspective of management, not a dumbing down. In fact, much of the existing management literature will be beneficial to a ManageWithoutThem practitioner.

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## Organisational Usability I Organisational Usability I

One of the Core Concepts of ManageWithoutThem is Organisational Usability. Organisational Usability is a broad term, created specifically for the ManageWithoutThem model. We will be revisiting Organisational Usability in future articles.

Organisational Usability uses the analogy of an Internet web site for your entire organisation. It is the advent of the Internet (and other personal communication technologies) that has made apparent the need for organisational redesign - so the analogy is a good fit.

Your organisation exists as a resource to be used by your customers and your employees. That is not to say that your

organisation should be left to the whim of your employees and customers. What we mean is that as your employees are serving customers or creating new value through projects, they are leveraging the resources of your company. In this sense, your customers and employees are 'using' your organisation.

The effectiveness and efficiency in which the resources of the organisation can be leveraged is the Organisational Usability of the organisation.

And now some examples of the Web Site analogy in action...

#### Link to Homepage

One of the first lessons you learn in any web site usability course is that each page should have a link to the home page. This is because users of your web site might not enter the site from your homepage. Users need a way of exploring other pages of your site and other information or services you might offer.

As you gain experience with web site development you start to realise that the 'link to homepage' approach is an inadequate solution to the problem of mid-site entry into a web site. **In Organisational Usability this is the equivalent of having to call the CEO to get something done!**

#### Links to Related Services

Your organisational will have high Organisational Usability if it has a more sophisticated strategy than 'ask the CEO' whenever somebody finds itself lost within it.

Departments, particularly shared service providers, should be aware of any services that are related to their offerings. This will include relationships up and down the value chain, as well as peer relationships. This will also include relationships outside your company. Your IT department should know about the IT industry. Your Accounting department should know about the Accounting industry. Your Procurement department should know about the Procurement industry. (etc)

#### Pre-emptive Processes

When somebody visits your web site you have no idea how much of their purchase they have already completed. The web site user might need background information on how to start looking for products in your industry. Alternatively, the web site user might already have a part number and their credit card ready.

The importance of this to Organisational Usability is that the **customers and employees of your organisation may wish to enter your processes from a point other than the beginning.**

Equally as important, your employees and customers will be of varying levels of sophistication. Some may want you to manage things for them; but others (probably the best ones) will want to manage things themselves.

Still more sophisticated, might be those that want to outsource the activity you provide for them with very high expectations of service and quality. It is also likely that users have entered your site through a Portal of some kind.

For these reasons **your customers (or employees from other departments) may not always want your Project Management services.** Your customers may want to define their relationship with your process themselves.

#### Process in context

Your web site might have the most easy-to-use ordering system ever created, but it is not very helpful if your customers can't get to it from the product they wish to buy. For this reason, the practice of placing 'Buy Me' and 'Go to

Checkout buttons beside each item is well established.

As far as Organisational Usability is concerned it should be understood that **the context of day-to-day business will never be your companies business management system** (which lists all of your organisation's processes) and you don't want it to be.

If you want employees and customers to use particular processes you should think very carefully about **when** they will need to use those processes. **Process owners should ask themselves: What would an employee be doing at the time that they should use my process?** Then, every effort should be made to make the process visible from that context.

## Frames

For those that don't know, 'frames' (or 'framesets') is the term used when building web sites to describe a page made up of multiple sub pages viewed together. Frames are often seen as poor web site design because you don't know if you are viewing a page as a stand-alone page or if you are viewing the page in the context of the rest of the frameset.

In terms of Organisational Usability frames represent the other things that your employee or customer knows when they use your processes. The fact is they may know more or less than you expect.

## Markets: Employees and Customers Converge

There is constant reference to Employees and Customers within this article. The traditional view of organisations requires you to view these as fundamentally different groups. Once you start viewing your organisation from the perspective of its Organisational Usability you will see these two groups converge.

After all if your company's web site really does provide useful information about your organisation your employees will also visit it regularly.

## General

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### New Economy White Goods New Economy White Goods

You know the scenario. You've put on a load of washing, you're just about to sit down with a cup of coffee and you hear the build-up of your washing machine's death march as it kicks into the spin cycle, wobbles around uncontrollably and then clicks off because it's unbalanced.

If you'd been watching your machine you'd have been quite amused. It appears to have a life of its own as it walks around your laundry banging into walls. It's definitely out of control - and in a bad way, right?

Now stop and ask yourself - When did the washing in the machine go off balance? - During the washing cycle or during the spin cycle?

You'd be amazed how many people get this wrong, but the washing went off balance during the washing cycle. When the action of the machine was slow and steady and easy to see. At the time when, if the water was clear, you could see where most of your clothes were - and what they were up to. And gee, if only the outside of the machine was clear, you could get an even better look.

When the spin cycle started it was quickly discovered that the machine was off balance. But don't blame the spin cycle! The machine was always off balance. It wasn't even the wash cycle that was the problem - the machine itself has always been off balance. It's the way the washing machine was sitting on the floor!

It's not even the clothes you put in the machine that made it off balance. Nor is it the size of the load. In fact, sometimes my washing machine is more likely to rattle when it's got FEWER clothes in it!

Now, you could have just kept doing washing cycles with that machine for years and never known it was off balance. The thing is, as soon as you speeded up the action of the washing machine you could easily identify the problem. You had to, of course, get used to the idea that you couldn't necessarily see what all the clothes were doing at any particular moment.

What if your washing machine had never entered the New Economy (oops, I mean spin cycle)? What if you were always just using the wash cycle? Would all have really been going well?

The gears and general mechanics of the washing machine would still have been getting damaged. The very fact that the machine was off balance was causing damage - whether you knew it was off balance or not. All those parts of the machine that were doing the actual work felt in their bones that there was something wrong all along.

And your clothes, the very reason that you bought a washing machine in the first place, they were never getting an optimal clean while the machine was unbalanced.

In the end, it was lucky that you had to go into that spin cycle - it's really opened up your relationship with your washing machine.

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The Internet:

Anti-Capitalism or Hyper-Capitalism? The Internet:  
Anti-Capitalism or Hyper-Capitalism?

The only reason business has needed to change its approach to value because of the Internet is because they are the ones that have been creating all of the economic value. The mass production of products and services, and thus, the creation of value, has been the concern of big business for over 100 years. If the Internet and other personal technologies have changed the definition of value, then make no mistake; the best of big business will change to provide it.

By assuming that the Internet is fundamentally contrary to the idea of big business you are assuming that the Internet is anti-Capitalism. **In reality the Internet is Hyper-Capitalism.**

Markets

Capitalism depends on trade within a market. It is the trade of value for value within that market. More specifically, Capitalism's self-evolving markets actually define what items have value. The items of greatest value are those that the market most wants to trade.

The self-organisation of the Internet is its own market. The Internet, however, has the ability to be a market for all types of different value. While a strict financial market is optimised for the trade of money (and related concepts), we have already seen that the Internet is happy to trade any type of information or idea.

Individual Access to Markets

Not only has the Internet increased the scope of what can be traded, but the entry requirements for trade have also been lowered. The Internet, and related technologies, make it easier for individuals to establish themselves as independent traders within the market.

## Individual Value Creation

Individuals can now create value in the same way that perhaps only big business once could. Individuals can make capital acquisitions and purchase assets that can then be turned into profit in the same way as any big business.

This is exactly what a person is doing when they 'invest' time working in a coffee shop to earn 'cash'. More importantly, it is what they are doing when they use that 'cash' to buy a computer ('assets' or 'capital expenditure') and take themselves through university ('training'). That person is acting like a business when they can then make more money than they have spent on those capital investments. They are acting like a business when they trade their skills for money in the workforce. They are acting like a business when they have created value.

Of course, that was the most basic and common example. **The Internet, and technology in general, puts more and more tools with the potential to create value within the reach of individuals. But it doesn't take them away from big business.**

## Communities vs. Markets

A lot of attention has been given to the communities that the Internet allows to be created. And with good reason, these communities are important. But they are at their most powerful when they begin to trade amongst themselves. They don't have to be trading money; but **the individuals within the community must be trading value for value.**

It is not enough for a community to establish itself and spend day after day denouncing big business. Communities only become more intelligent than big business when they start to trade, when they become a market.

Of course, there is nothing stopping any corporation from creating an internal market without its walls.

## Nothing Stopping Your Organisation

There is nothing stopping a business collecting the best creators of value and setting them up to trade (value for value) both within the organisation and with the organisation's customers and extended enterprise.

The creation of this organisational market is one of the goals of the ManageWithoutThem principles.

Both big business and individuals need to change because of the increase in each individual's ability to create value. Both big business and every other individual are in competition with the best creators of value.

## **This is Hyper-Capitalism.**

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## Quantum and Particle Physics [Quantum and Particle Physics](#)

In particle physics apples fall from trees, matter is made of atoms with a comprehensible structure, objects either exist or they don't, and a defined set of forces will produce a defined result. Things behave sequentially.

But in quantum physics objects have a probability of existing, matter is a messy cloud, and observation effects reality. (more on quantum physics can be found on [this site](#))

The 'quantum foam' of quantum physics; the unexpectedly dynamic and complex mess that quantum physicists consider matter to be made up of, is like the ManageWithoutThem internal market.

Most of your particle physics, which were once quite adequate for modeling how your organisation worked, will have to be reconsidered. Many of the tools you once used to describe your particle physics organisation; your process charts and organisational hierarchies, simply won't work to describe a ManageWithoutThem organisation.

To describe a ManageWithoutThem organisation will be difficult for a particle physicist. Each time a document is written, or a new procedure, or a job description, you will be writing like a particle physicist. And you may be the very best particle physicist around; but you're trying to write about quantum physics. Not only that, but people will expect you to write about particle physics.

So it's going to be more difficult. But don't despair. The fact is the quantum physics is quite simply a more accurate way of viewing the way the universe works. Not only that but in quantum physics things that have been proved to be impossible in particle physics are suddenly possible.

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## MWT Systems Framework MWT Systems Framework

This is a framework for developing self-managing systems. The elements will be the topics of future articles on ManageWithoutThem.com. A brief introduction follows:

**Zero-Latency...** this is about access to information. The theory is this... if you want data stored in a system so you can analysis it later on, make sure the data gets into the system at the very moment it is created in the 'real world'.

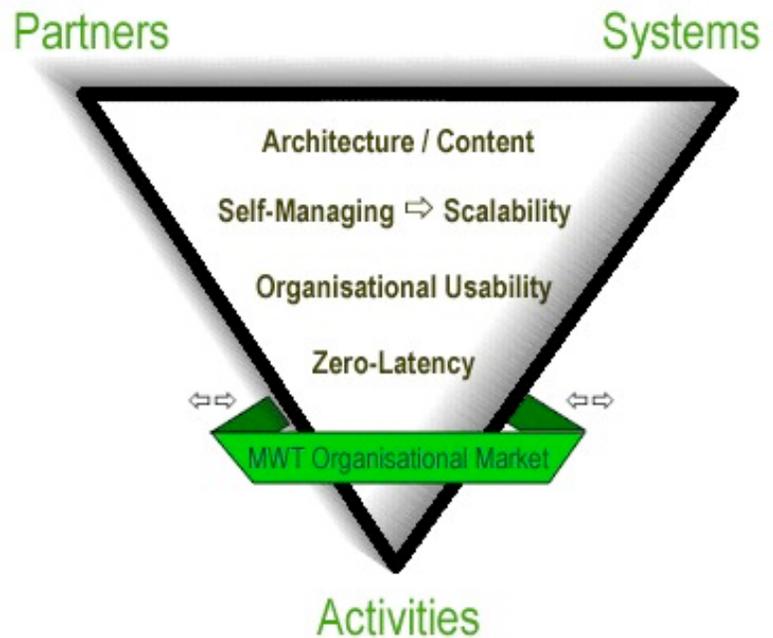
Don't for a single second think that people are going to put up with a separate 'data entry' activity any more. If the data isn't created in the system as part of the actual process of doing 'the work' then IT WILL NEVER GET IN THE SYSTEM.

And the same goes for data retrieval... if somebody (ANYBODY) in the entire company decides that there might be a correlation between product sales and particular sporting event they need to be able to check that correlation NOW!!! If they can't get to the information immediately they will not do it! (... don't kid yourself, they wont!).

**Self-Managing -> Scalability...** this is about www.amazon.com! Anybody can create content on that site! Also, it wouldn't matter is they were selling 50 different books or 50 million.

Why can't your company work like that?!?!?!? There is no need to have control of a process (checkpoints and sign-offs) for you to know what's going on within the process.

The bosses at Amazon know... the best selling books... the average delivery times... the percentages of repeat business... and not only that THE CUSTOMERS can know this information too... WITHOUT ASKING ANYBODY...



ManageWithoutThem Systems Framework

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The Plan?!?!?... a www.amazon.com architecture for the Intranet-based, market-modelled corporate Intranet.

You can have your cake and eat it too!!! You can 'go wild' within losing control or performance indicators... (perhaps you'll even know MORE about what is going on in your company?!?!?).

Key questions...

What if I suddenly needed to do 100 times the number of transaction that I'm currently doing? 1000 times? 10,000 times? Would it require... more people? (that's okay)... but, what if it requires more people exactly like me?!?!? (that's bad).

**Architecture / Content** (or 'Edges and Interfaces')... how much do you really want to know?!?!? This might be in inevitable 'partnering' backlash (?). It's important to sit in the pocket of your partners (customers AND suppliers), really it is, but you need to know how you communicate.

The key question here is 'what is the context?'. How will this system/process/supplier/customer talk to the world around it?

Work this out first! It will reduce the risk of failure of the individual project/components.

**Organisational Usability** (or 'If you want it to happen, make it easier to do. Support It!')... this one is obvious! And the obvious example is financial responsibility and accountability.

All companies want to make money... apparently it's all about shareholder value (and somehow over the years this has come to mean 'not spending' rather than 'performing'... but that's another story).

Management is always complaining that employees just don't seem to understand the need to work within a budget...

But how many companies give each and every employee access to financial information (at all levels)? How many companies give each and every employee a budget or the environment and real skills required to bid for funds in a true marketplace? (answer: none)

If you want people to follow your strategy... tell them what it is!!!

etc etc etc

**Activities / Systems / Partners ...** how do all of the above philosophies apply across everything you do? A quick example... Edges and interfaces as it applies to 'Activities'... what is the minimal information you need to know about a Project in order to be able to relinquish control of the project to somebody else but still be able to track it and...  
DETERMINE IF IT WAS A SUCCESS!!!???

(note: This systems framework is all about delegation and massive-scale collaboration. It's about architecting a system/organism which runs on distributed management...)

1. All 'managers' go to their bookshelves, pick up all their management books – The Guru Guide, Michael Porter's stuff, Tom Peters' stuff, The Fifth Discipline, all the old logistics books, marketing books, supply chain books, branding books, etc... and give them to their staff.
2. Allow your staff to talk to each other, manage themselves, own their own processes, and have their own customers. In short, create your internal organisational market. Also, make sure they read some of the management books you've given them.
3. All the 'managers', having let loose this internal market of newly self-managing employees, should go out and buy some new books: Economics books and books on 'rational choice theory'. They no longer control the internal organisational market – so they'll have to start thinking of their organisation like a market analyst would.

Of course, to become a ManageWithoutThem collaborative enterprise everybody will need to have some level of shared understanding of the organisation's new operating framework. So, everybody should subscribe to the ManageWithoutThem.com mailing list.

Have fun... :-)

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## The Book of MWT [The Book of MWT](#)

The structure of the book is currently as follows. Click on chapter heading to see the current drafts:

- [Introduction](#)
- [Is My Work Interfering with Your Management of It, Again?](#)
- [An Historical Perspective](#)
- [De-Aggregation and Re-Aggregation of Management Itself](#)
- [Leverage the Network](#)
- [The Document is Not the Project](#)
- [From Us and Them to I](#)
- [The Incredible Shrinking Management](#)
- [Organizational Usability](#)
- [The Gentle Cowboy](#)
- [Separation of the Senses](#)
- [Of Control and Responsibility](#)
- [Of Planning](#)
- [Of Politics and Reason](#)
- [Of Professionalism](#)
- [Irreverence Revolution and Hypocrisy](#)
- [Of Life and Work](#)
- [Of Culture and Values](#)
- [Of Organizational Design](#)
- [Of Beginning and Futures](#)

Please note: I'm really not an author by trade. This 'book' (and the articles on the rest of the site for that matter) are going to be a real struggle. Please bear with me. :-)

## Back 2 Basics for Management Back 2 Basics for Management

The B2B world has had to re-evaluate its business plans with fundamentals in mind (the media and Ariba ex-CEO Keith Krach now call it 'B2B – back 2 basics').

B2B exchanges and marketplaces, while important, didn't turn out to be the miracle some people hoped for. It short - they build it, but they did not come.

ManageWithoutThem is all about fundamentals. ManageWithoutThem is actually a response to trends towards fundamentals: fundamentals of life within markets, and a (online) hyper capitalism.

However, our main focus is on fundamentals in the coordination within firms. While this will ultimately effect the coordination of the entire value chain or extended enterprise we believe it should start in the firm – in preparation for effective participation in the outside market.

Putting aside our particular approach (market-based management), what is our definition of management itself? We need a definition that doesn't presume any of the assumptions most people have about what management must be.

**ManageWithoutThem considers 'management' to be the principles of the organisation that cooperating participants share.**

Management, in this definition based on fundamentals, will have values, axioms, and other tenets that hold true for all perspectives and levels of analysis in the organisation.

For market-based management specifically, these tenets will include the principle of trading value for value and a shared architecture of collaboration that respects each participant's competence.

The exceptions to this fundamental definition would be high-level executives and board members (and shareholders, of course). They have perspectives that should be considered outside the actual management of the organisation.

As ManageWithoutThem is based on radically distributed management, any definition of management that reduces to 'management is any activity that managers do' is discounted. We are, however, pleased to announce that: within a ManageWithoutThem organisation, everybody manages ('That you manage is a given! – What else do you do?'). But that doesn't help us in our quest for a definition of management itself.

Besides, any definition of management that equates to 'what managers do' separates the management of tasks from the performance of tasks.

Back to fundamentals: management arises out of the division of labour and the need to coordinate the separate, but related activities that the division of labour creates.

If management is performed by one person and the tasks by another, then they simply become another set of separate but related activities. This new division of labour would necessitate more 'management' to coordinate the activities – and so on - but who would manages the coordination of the final division of labour?

Eventually, you need to rely on a set of shared values, axioms, and other tenets that hold true for all perspectives and levels of analysis in the organisation, as per our original definition above.

As for the question of 'who would manage the coordination of the final division of labour?' We suggest nobody would – it would be the shared tenets themselves – the market.

Eventually, you would need to... ManageWithoutThem.

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### Management by Inspecting - Governance by Sampling Management by Inspecting - Governance by Sampling

I've previously discussed the concept of Single Point Management (SPM). SPM is typified by the association with being responsible for something and having control over it.

For example, if you are a Client Relationship Manager you would be exhibiting Single Point Management if you said 'I am the Client Relationship Manager, therefore all communication with the client must be signed-off by me.'

This is avoiding both the responsibilities of good management and good governance. It avoids the responsibilities of management simply because it places the burden of raising communication to a manager to just about everybody else without creating any other incentives to do so.

More importantly, it also ignores the responsibilities of governance. The clues to this are in the Quality Assurance (QA) discipline. Quality Assurance has element of Single Point Management about it when it speaks of 'Inspections' (or reviews).

It's common knowledge that, for example, documents such as project deliverables, should be reviewed. This thinking is borrowed from the QA discipline around manufacturing and the need to inspect items as they come off the production line.

The point at which this becomes Single Point Management (and therefore against the MWT philosophy) is when inspections (or reviews) are mandatory for all work products.

However, the QA discipline used around manufacturing already recognises that all products will not be inspected fully. In reality a sample of the work products is inspected perhaps using an 80/20 rule.

In the case of manufacturing, sample-based inspections are employed for practical reasons. However, sample-based inspections also have benefits when it comes to good management and governance in general.

If a governance office simply inspects (or reviews) all documents, effectively applying Single Point Management to the quality of those documents, they can always blame the absence of inspection for quality problems.

However, if we force sample-based inspections but maintain the original inspection group's responsibility for the quality of the work products we force that group to apply other methods to ensure quality.

These other methods (such as creation of intellectual capital, creation and adoption of tools, etc) can be performed in the time saved by reducing the number of inspections performed.

Also, the process of trying to define the sample to be inspected will force those responsible to develop and disseminate practical categorisations and mappings of work products.

Once such an approach is adopted, the quality of work products is a measure of both the individuals or teams creating the work products and the management process (including the review process) around the creation of those work products.

Rather than the producers of the work products learning how to 'pass the review' the entire system as a whole is measured. Continuous improvement is also on the system as a whole.

Question: How many other examples are there of discretionary 80/20 rules which could improvement governance and management if they were made mandatory?

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### Beyond Attitude Beyond Attitude

How many times have you seen an employee chastised for not doing what a client (internal or external) asks? Now I'm not talking about attitude problems here; I'm talking about one person trying to tell another person directly how to do their job.

In these situations managers often take the default position that 'we should just do what they ask'. However, the management system needs to coordinate the division of labour across all stakeholders (including customers, technical specialisations, supply-chain partners, etc).

The most important part of this process is giving each collaborating partner a sense of their responsibilities.

In a MWT organisation that collaboration architecture comes conceptually 'above' the schedule, issue, risk, event, and financial perspective usually associated with 'management'.

In this way, it is the management system's primary function to provide the delineation of tasks such that not everybody has a say in everything. This is the inverse stabilising force too 'responsibility'. If you are responsible for something you have some say in how it's done.

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### 'I'm Not a Technology Person' 'I'm Not a Technology Person'

Anybody in the IT industry knows that any chance of a useful argument is lost once somebody utters the words 'I'm not a technology person'. You don't even have to be talking about technology - I once mentioned business process re-engineering to an 'innovation consultant' and they said 'Sorry I'm not a technical person'.

The phrase has simply come to mean 'I don't know what you're talking about'.

I don't understand why the Information Technology discipline is treated differently than other disciplines in this respect. If a computer programmer was to suddenly hold up their hands to a 'business person' and say 'sorry; I'm not a business person' they would be told that they simply have to understand because that is their job.

I'm a great defender of specialisation. But I'm not suggesting that programmers should start using this approach. I'm simply identifying an inequity which I believe hampers integration of technical and non-technical people.

I think this whole issue is related to another problem which appears unique to the IT industry. The IT profession is the only profession I know of where having a particular set of skills actually restricts your opportunities.

People wear the declaration of 'I'm not a technology person' with pride. They are more willing to say what they are not than what they actually are! I've need job vacancies which specify 'non-technical people' and little else.

### IT/Business Alignment and Off-Shore Development

There is a recognised problem in the IT industry around Business/IT alignment. I would never argue against IT serving

business objectives. But alignment is about integration; and integration is about building the correct seams ([link to Seamlessness](#)).

It is up to technology people to define what a technology issue is. A self-confessed non-technical person has no right saying when something is a technology issue.

Equally, the IT industry has a variety of different competencies and roles within it. It can't be managed by an outsider who simply groups all of these roles into 'the technical work' done by 'the technical people'.

I once witnessed a financial services expert who'd just read a UML (unified modelling language; the basis for one of the many approaches to software design and development) book. He described his vision for cost reduction in the development of IT applications.

Essentially, his 'solution' was to move all of the vaguely defined 'technical' people off shore and have all of the 'business' people at the client organisation defining requirements using this modelling language.

Nowhere was the discipline of software architecture or even software design mentioned. Presumably he saw these disciplines as either technical disciplines (and therefore delegated to life as far away from the client as possible) or he saw them as business people (and therefore having at best a remote relationship with the technical team).

I really think that off-shore development has a future. I think it is the future. But all attempts at such a model will fail while the IT industry allows outsiders to pigeon-hole the entire IT industry in a single somebody-else's problem of technical people while at the same time telling the industry how it should manage itself.

In closing; I'm talking about the clients of IT organisations here. Clients have every right to not concern themselves with technology issues. In fact, they shouldn't concern themselves with technology issues. I'm talking about people within technology companies, including IT managers, arbitrarily claiming to be not a technology person.

It is the entire organisation that serves the client as a system. It's that system that suffers when one discipline is put down by another.

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PMs will thank me: [Anti-Anti-Management I](#) PMs will thank me: Anti-Anti-Management I

Essentially, I point out that management itself is only a coordination mechanism attached to the division of labour; and that economics already tells us that there are two types of coordination mechanism – command-based and market-based.

MWT simply converts the "planning + monitoring + control" view of management into a "technology-augmented marketed + operationalised brands + collaboration architecture" view of management. But you already know all this right?

But there is another sense in which MWT is pro-management. I believe this because of my view of the current direction organisations are taking – and where I think that will lead them.

Management is in fact already being taken over by process and automation. I'll like only at the process context here.

Say you have a large set of processes in your organisation which describe how your work is supposed to be performed. Once the process-based view of your organisation is established any issues that are identified are usually fixed by adding to the processes.

In this approach, and I've seen this happen already, even deliverables like project schedules and communication strategies are treated like just another deliverable with associated best practices, standards, and quality criteria.

In one sense I agree with this trend. In effect it places the project management function (or management functions in general) level with other factors of production in the organisation. In theory this would mean that their value is questioned and evaluated like any other activity (i.e. you wouldn't do a detailed project plan just because "we have to do it's management").

But those of use who have already had our jobs described in a process know that the continuous improvement processes are never very efficient. This is because they require too much intervention and cross-function coordination to initiate improvement; but that's another article.

What a process-based view of management really does (eventually) is reduce a project managers control over their resources (again, there are argument for this too; but in a process-based organisation the results are regretful).

Firstly, the project managers control over their resources is reduced because they can't arbitrarily direct their resources. The process itself directs the resources. But it goes beyond that.

What the project managers will find in a process-based organisation is that eventually their will be standards around what the individual milestones, tasks, durations, and sequences should be in their project plan.

In a (purely) process-based organisation the management function is not special. Again, almost what MWT wants but not quite.

In a MWT organisation the management function IS special. It's the individual activities (planning, monitoring, control) and the way they are performed (on a whim) that changes.

So why will project managers thank me? Because in a MWT organisation the collaboration architectures which manage the coordination of resources need to be created collaboratively. Collaboratively, in a MWT organisation, includes the management activities. (it should be noted that collaboration in a MWT organisation isn't anything like 'rule by committee'; in fact in a MWT organisation you 'delineate to collaborate' and the process is the process of finding the right seams to delineate across.)

Also, MWT is based natural rights and other core principles. A project managers control over their resources (or autonomy) are directly proportional to the amount of responsibility for the end result they are willing to take on.

So in a MWT organisation a project manager can 'bargain' more control over their resources. Bargaining is perhaps the wrong image it's simply trading. But it's a transparent trading which recognised downstream consequences and accountabilities.

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Finally, The Big Picture Finally, The Big Picture

The article is available from Amazon at the link below. I'm afraid I can't reproduce it here but it's cheaply available as a download:

Organigraphs: Drawing How Companies Really Work  
Henry Mintzberg and Ludo Van Der Heyden; Digital

The article is simply an introduction; and doesn't really present a full-featured operating model visualisation methodology.

However, its value is in the recognition that there is a view organisations somewhere between the org chart and the detailed process flows.

Mintzberg and Heyden focus on very high-level visualisations which tend to describe whole organisations. But I think the idea needs to be extended to programme and project level organisations. Just like an org chart doesn't show what's really going on inside an organisation, an org chart and a Gantt chart doesn't show what is required to meet a set of project objectives.

You probably won't be able to site the type of visualisations presented in the article within your organisation. They fall into the category of what I'd call operating model visualisations.

Occasionally, you might see a business model visualised within your organisation - clearly showing the inputs and outputs of your organisation - but I've found the view of an operating model highly neglected.

You're more likely to find a visualisation of something like a 'vision'. These can also be useful too but tend to be far too abstract or metaphorical to be of any true value day-to-day. They are also not useful for developing strategy; because they embody strategic decisions already made (either explicitly or implicitly).

The fact that there isn't a standardised approach, or even universal interest, in tools like Organigraphs amongst managers is also telling. This is another example of the management discipline being more or less incapable of innovation. There is too little competition among different ideas of management, no true feedback, and too many scapegoats.

Look in the management section in your local bookstore and what you'll find are self-help books for people with power. In most book shops the management section is even placed right beside the self-help section. Don't buy those books - buy [these books](#) and [this article](#).

Incomplete

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In Defence of Rationality [In Defence of Rationality](#)

The economic definition of 'rational', as opposed to the type of rationality that the likes of Henry Mintzberg, Tom Peters, and Christopher Locke (rightly) criticise, is not a rationality that is enforced upon others.

In economics, an action is rational by virtue of it being that action taken by an individual consistent with their values, competence, and context.

For a definition from the Ludwig von Mises economics site, [click here](#).

(Please be patient; the real 'In Defence of Rationality' article is coming soon)

Introductory

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What is Manage Without Them? [What is Manage Without Them?](#)

ManageWithoutThem challenges the notion that 'management' is something that is performed only by 'managers'. Its central premise is that the word management has lost its meaning as the distributed coordination function of an organisation.

ManageWithoutThem is not against management; nor is it against process. ManageWithoutThem does, however, condemn the centralisation of management and the separation of management from what is being managed.

From a practical point of view, ManageWithoutThem is an evolving framework for distributed management. Of course, management still occurs in a ManageWithoutThem organisation; perhaps even more management actually occurs. ManageWithoutThem is the individualisation of management.

While many organisations are dominated by the question of 'who should make this decision?' the ManageWithoutThem organisation transcends these types of questions and concentrates on the actual quality of the decisions themselves, the reality of the context of the decisions, and the actions they invoke.

Making the move to the ManageWithoutThem model is both a personal and an organisational journey. Within the personal journey it is the re-acceptance of responsibility and the elimination of 'them'. For the organisational journey it is the letting go of certain fallacies of control, responsibility, and their relationship to organisational efficiency and effectiveness.

Switching to a ManageWithoutThem organisation requires substantial effort. There will, however, be immediate returns on that investment. There will also be a personal and organisational 'crisis of change'. We believe this 'crisis of change' is reoccurring and should not be avoided; it should, however, be acknowledged and supported.

The journey will be as difficult as it is rewarding. We hope ManageWithoutThem.com becomes a valuable resource in both your personal and organisational journeys. Please check our site regularly as we add both original content and links to other resources from all over the Internet.

Have Fun! And remember: Your Organisation Doesn't Care Who is Managing It!

(But also remember it's 'Without **Them**', not 'Without Management'. **We love management.**)

## Learning from the Past

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### Historic Innovation Historic Innovation

In Chris's précis of the management book 'Built to Last', he describes organisations that are actually managed by slogans. What's more he suggests, 'each of these slogans has a higher action authority than any employee's immediate boss or measurement instrument'.

When I read such a statement I can't help but think (after much high-five'ing) of the ancient Romans. Not because I live 2050 years ago (or in a Monty Python movie), but because I think the business world is stuck in the early maturity of organisational design.

For the Romans the challenge was to reconcile peace and freedom. I can't remember the details, but the history of pre-Cicero Rome was a history of trying to have a peaceful civilization while keeping the citizens free.

Because the civilization was ruled by an absolute ruler (ie. 'rule by man') they found that if the ruler was hard and controlling then they would have peace (in that the citizens wouldn't fight each other). But if they had a 'soft' ruler, who didn't control the citizens, the citizens would be free – but, unfortunately, they would all start fighting with each other, again.

Eventually, they found that the problem was 'rule by man' itself. The alternative was 'rule by law' or 'rule by belief'. In

short, it was the shared values, rules, and beliefs that the citizens had that would actually rule the civilization.

Using this principle they started the long journey that would reconcile peace and freedom. This simple concept is the reason things like the constitution exist. Far from controlling the citizens, the constitution limits the powers of government itself.

Of course, organizations have a similar dilemma. Perhaps we are trying to reconcile innovation and profitability (as opposed to peace and freedom). Or management and freedom. Or, if the silos in your organisation are always arguing, maybe it's still peace and freedom.

In any case, it is 'the principles of the organisation that cooperating participants share' (from my web site) that rules (or manages) the organisation. Or, like Chris says (and it's not dissimilar), there are shared slogans with a 'higher action authority than any employee's immediate boss or measurement instrument'.

Thousands of years latter, in the business world, rule by man is becoming rule by belief - all over again.

Perhaps how far civilization has come from Roman times is an indication of how far we can go in terms of understanding organizations and management.

## Managing Intangibles

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### Beyond Single Point Management Beyond Single Point Management

A classic management anti-pattern that the ManageWithoutThem principles attempt to re-factor a solution for is what we will call 'Single Point Management'.

Single Point Management (SPM) occurs when we try to manage things like communication, knowledge, quality, client relationships, etc. SPM roles are normally created in response to the realization that the intangible is vitally important to the success of the organisation. Yet, in the midst of a point-to-point communications revolution the only strategy we seem to be able to think of is to establish single point management of the 'resource'.

SPM is typified by statements of policy such as 'every communication must go through the Comms Department' and 'Don't talk to the client until you've asked the Client Relationship Manager' and 'All knowledge must be put in the knowledge management system and approved by the Corporate Knowledge Manager (who is at a KM conference in London)'.

The single-point (often a high-pressure role - by its own design) becomes 'responsible' for communication (or knowledge, or quality) and therefore assumes that they have to 'control' it.

The fact is that these so-called intangibles aren't the types of things that can be managed using the mechanisms we have constructed for the industrial age. **We have been willing to change what we manage - but not how we manage.**

### Knowledge Markets and Active Analysts

To manage intangibles the traditional manager needs to think of themselves as a kind of 'active analyst'. An active analyst of knowledge would be able to analyze the networks (or markets) of knowledge that are forming within the corporation.

Such a role would also have the scope to develop a technology augmented 'knowledge market' as a shared (optional?) service. This service would have as its customers the organisation's knowledge workers. The market would be structured to also assist the active analyst in their role - but that would not be it's primary purpose.

As an active analyst, you would be expected to be able to guide and steer the knowledge market. This would be achieved through means other than direct, restrictive participation in the processes but rather by mentoring and manipulation of the market (such as feedback and reward systems). Ideally this feedback would be part of the technological augmentation of the market and would occur in real-time.

Whether We Like it or Not

ManageWithoutThem principles help even if the above approach has not been officially adopted by the organisation. The knowledge market will always exist within the organisation (though it may be less efficient or free-flowing). What will be lacking are the tools to analyze it and ensure its pervasiveness.

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James Joyce and Jack Welch James Joyce and Jack Welch

Mr Joyce spewed out hundreds of pages all set in Dublin. He didn't explore other cities in his writing - just Dublin. His curriculum vitae doesn't even contain any 'projects' in Big 5 cities - like London, New York, San Francisco, Tokyo, or Vienna.

How could somebody who's spent so much time focused on the one organisation (pardon, city) know anything about cities in general? Any yet, George Bernard Shaw apparently said that 'you can see every city in the world in Joyce's Dublin'.

In this sense, Joyce's focus on a particular city appears to have paid off. Through Dublin his is able to understand, communicate, and make grandiose the daily activities of any and every city. In this way Joyce understands every city and it's people. Had he spread his time across a large number of cities he would know no more about cities than Don Juan knows about women.

But it's not as simple as that: Because Don Juan clearly knows a lot about women. By shifting his affections with each passing day, the Don learns to see the similarities between his lovers. His knowledge of that class of things - that fairer sex - is that of the similarities between them. The constant changes allow him to discover the essence of a class of things called 'women'. But he only discovers knowledge of the class – not of the individuals themselves.

But we all know that this is where Don Juan falters. Knowledge based on the similarities is knowledge of the collective group. When it comes to intimacy and knowledge of a particular woman Don Juan fails. When it comes to intimate knowledge of a city, of its people, Joyce knows more and learns quickly - based on his intimate knowledge of one he will quickly discover the details of others.

Knowledge of intellectual abstractions - groups and generalisations of people - is knowledge of similarities. Intimate knowledge of individuals - of one individual or many - is knowledge of differences.

Don Juan's knowledge of the intellectual abstraction of women had its uses. As a pure exercise of skill he was able to woo and win many women. But in the longer term did that do the women any good? Did it do Don Juan any good? Or the any of the company he kept?

Joyce's intimate knowledge is more valuable, more scalable. Never did he even explore the whole of Dublin. No epic tomb of Dublin emerged in the manner of a James A. Michener's Mexico, Hawaii, or Alaska; or Kim Stanley Robinson's Mars. Strictly speaking Joyce only captured a few streets within the city of Dublin (and a couple of streets in nearby Chapelizod). Amazingly, it is actually through only these few streets that we become intimate with Dublin itself, and only then with 'every city'.

Fast forward to the business and management world of today. We have invented a mentality that ostracises the Joyce's while rewarding the Don Juan's who hop from company to company leaving a trail of broken hearts and promises.

As these Don Juan's build their skills they will continue to woo and win hearts. But whether their breed of abstract knowledge of similarities is, in itself, good for the company they keep, is yet to be seen.

What was missing all along was the organisation's ability to utilise and leverage the more intimate and softer knowledge. The Joyce style intimate knowledge of differences is subtler - certainly more difficult to understand - but ultimately more rewarding.

Think of Jack Welch. When the world's most respected CEO stepped down he was 'leaving' a company he had spent his entire working life with (40 years!). GE's performance under Welch's guidance has been well documented.

Welch's success has always defied the company-hopping mentality. What's important is how those years of learning are lived and what has been achieved along the way. Superficial indicators like how many companies somebody has worked for serve only to separate, to focus only on the process, when the truth is subtle and hard to quantify.

Joyce style knowledge may well be found in the stayers, in an increasingly aging workforce, and in those whose confidence has not been artificially inflated by possessing the light touch of a wondering winner of hearts. It is these groups that the management of the MWT organisation must effectively coordinate.

## The Vague and the Damned

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### Values, Context, and Competence Values, Context, and Competence

(be warned; this is a little vague)

If people behave rationally, based on the economic definition, then people behave based on their context, values, and competence. All too often, especially after a failed endeavour, the focus of evaluation is based on competence.

This is primarily because the same group that creates the context performs the evaluation. Also, because the evaluator takes his or her own values as a given.

Don't get me wrong. I don't necessarily have a problem with the creation of context and the evaluation being performed by the same person. There is a percentage of the population that are truly exceptional leaders. However, they tend to operate outside the framework of what management theory generally considers good management process.

What these leaders do is insure that they are performing the tasks as they are named. They understand that the evaluation process should be performed in the context of the factors that really did contribute to the success or failure of the project.

We are currently in a transitional stage where it is seen as a competence in itself to perform tasks that you are simply not good at. I believe that this is a transitional stage because the success of the organisation will be ensured more by the effective coordination of specialists adding value than the tendency towards the further unqualified generalisation of individuations.

What the tendency towards generalisation forgets is that any arbitrary concentration on an area not related to your specialty necessarily takes time away from learning your specialty. Of course, this takes time away from learning your specialty within the context of your clients – that is, a systems, context-based view of your specialty.

What individuals within the organisation must learn is non-arbitrary generalisation. There is a class of specialist

knowledge that all employees must learn. This class of specialist knowledge is the shared knowledge that manages the organisation.

It is this shared specialist knowledge that the ManageWithoutThem philosophy designates as the 'management' of the organisation. The focus on competence evaluation born from combining the creation of context and the evaluation of performance has led to a focus on the competence of the lower levels of the organisation and a tendency not to question our established definitions of 'management'.

More specifically, the ManageWithoutThem philosophy acknowledges that there are elements of the organisation that actually manage the organisation beyond the managers themselves.

Far from suggesting that managers don't contribute to the success of the organisation, the ManageWithoutThem philosophy proposes that the most successful managers focus their attention on the areas of values and context and create their greatest value to the organisation by manipulating these dimensions.

Topical

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Reconciliation and MWT Reconciliation and MWT

It appears to be a common theme. Watching the 'It Starts With Us' Reconciliation event in Melbourne, Australia on Friday night one theme stood out. Speakers Rubin 'Hurricane' Carter and Nelson Mandela (and even a brief comment from one of the students who apparently helped initiate the entire event) all made one point very clear.

For those of you who don't know, the Australian prime minister has been bagged by a section of the community in recent months for not saying the words 'I'm Sorry' to the aboriginal people of Australia for 'past injustices'.

**The speakers of the night tried desperately to get across that 'It doesn't matter if the prime minister says 'Sorry''. Reconciliation, they said, started with each and every one of the people in the audience.**

Try as they might, many of the presenters, and one of the performers, seemed to miss the point entirely. The event became somewhat of a tribute to Nelson Mandela and a weapon to force the prime minister to say 'sorry'.

People want managers and leaders. They are desperate for it. Not only that, but they want those higher up to start reforms. You hear it all the time that the best way to get something changed is to get management 'buy in'. The fact is, relying on the hierarchy is never the best or fastest way to initiate change.

**Change is best initiated through distributed and individual efforts. Nelson Mandela recognizes that, and so do the ManageWithoutThem principles.**

ManageWithoutThem principles work for distributed management and change. It does not matter if your manager is not recognizing your groups. What matters is that your group is taking responsibility for your own professional lives. That you're searching out (or creating) projects that will stretch and inspire you. That your learning new tricks of the trade and that you're helping your workmates do the same.

It simply does not matter whether or not our 'bosses' are with us on this one.

---

IDC Directions2001 IDC Directions2001

I recently attended Directions2001 in Sydney, Australia. Directions2001 is a one day event for IT professions organised by IDC, an IT industry research company.

Basically, the event consists of a number of presentations given by IDC analysts which summarize the emerging trends in the IT industry and attempt to give predictions about opportunities for the next 12 months.

This year (it's the first year I've attended), the analysis revealed such insights as 'to be a successful vendor in this industry you will have to deliver a unique value proposition'. Also, that 'focusing on delivering a return on investment to your clients will increase your chance of success'.

That is to say, the analysis revealed some basic principles of economics. In a real market, almost by definition, a successful vendor delivers a value proposition, or it no longer exists. In a real market, firms only invest in the services of another firm if those services are going to offer a return on investment.

For those in business development or sales, communicating both these propositions is a given if you want to successfully close a sale. For those in the delivery of services, delivery on both propositions is a given if you want happy clients.

So why do we need analysis to tell us basic economics? Of course, many of us at Directions2001 didn't. I'm certainly not criticizing IDC; the event was valuable in many ways. But, why do we need analysis to tell us basic economics?

Internet technologies are recognized on this web site to result in hyper-capitalism, as opposed to changing any fundamental rules of economics. I think analysis will continue to 'reveal' this fact over the next few years.

The difficulty IDC will have to face is that, increasingly, by the time the venues are organised and the PowerPoint slides are proofread, their target audience will simply already know what the analysis is going to say.

Constantly plugged into the net, people's biological aggregators and abstractors will have been working in real-time to formulate trends. The connected markets will be constantly learning. In many cases the predictions will be wrong – but regardless, in many cases, the predictions will be wrong.

If engaging predictions are going to be made about the future it is these trends which must be examined: the trends of hyper-capitalism and connected markets.

Following these trends my prediction for the next big wave the IT industry will be involved with is as follows:

What is the only element of the economy that doesn't behave like a market? What is the only element of the economy that doesn't explicitly take advantage of connected markets?

The answer is the management of firms. The next wave is to produce information systems that allow firms (or dynamic groups of related firms) to be managed within an internal market.

That, incidentally, is what ManageWithoutThem is already trying to do.

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## About MWT

ManageWithoutThem is market-based management for the firm. Far from an organisational *laissez-faire*, the ManageWithoutThem model forces organisations to be explicit about their values.

In such an environment management itself changes from planning, monitoring, and controlling to simply 'what collaborating individuals share'.

The ManageWithoutThem model provides a framework for operationalising a corporation's brand to become its primary horizontal organising mechanism. This brand has a higher authority than any particular manager, organisational structure, or process.

Through ManageWithoutThem IT value is realised by focusing implementation of information technology towards the creation of markets.

Management itself becomes redefined as operationalised brands + technology-augmented markets.

By focusing on **organisational culture**, **organisational design**, and **organisational usability** (a ManageWithoutThem term) the ManageWithoutThem principles build a framework in which management can be distributed without the risks often associated with a distributed management model.

ManageWithoutThem is a **responsibility-based** model of organisational control. Bureaucracies and supervision based control ideas are replaced, for key practices, to allow for self-organisation and market responsiveness.

In fact, if you're not using ManageWithoutThem principles in your organisation, you are not getting the full value out of all the talent you are recruiting, the diversity your recruitment policies are creating, your partnerships with other organisations, or the experience of your long-term employees.

Future content will also focus on **How to Lead People Who are Managing Without You**.

## Become a Contributor

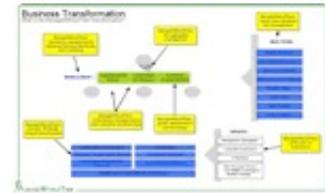
If you would like to show your expertise and contribute to ManageWithoutThem.com by publishing an original article please [contact us](#). Use your contributions to complement your business's own web site by

## Related Links

### Core Concepts

### What is ManageWithoutThem?

[View the MWT Management Transformation](#)



linking to your web site from each article published.

Articles will be accepted for publication at the sole discretion of ManageWithoutThem.com.

#### Services

We are working on related service offerings to complement the ManageWithoutThem principles. Through these service offerings you will be able to accelerate the adoption of ManageWithoutThem principles into your organisation. If you can't wait, and would like to start adopting ManageWithoutThem principles right now, please contact us.

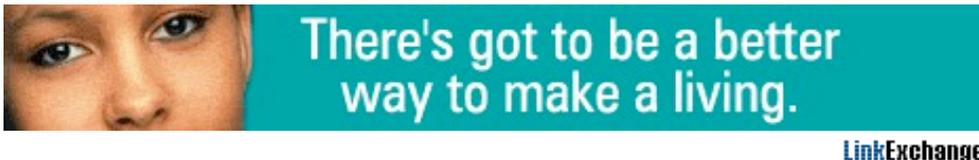
We are also looking for **software development partners** for the development of innovative information systems which will allow you to better run your organisation on ManageWithoutThem principles (by coordinating distributed management).

#### About Us

You'll learn more about the ManageWithoutThem players as time goes by. We think it's only appropriate that we say something useful first. You can always email and ask for further information at: info@managewithoutthem.com or on the Contact Us page.

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## Common Misconceptions about the MWT Model

No management transformation model is going to be safe from critics, and the ManageWithoutThem Model is no exception. After all, as managers are fond of saying, 'Change is hard'. What they are less likely to admit is that managers are the hardest to change of all.

Below are the most common misconceptions people might have about the ManageWithoutThem Model. Anybody who reads the book will likely have more specific questions and comments but these are intended for those who don't intend to read the book because they have already decided they know what the model is all about.

### Not Anti-Management... Pro-Governance

I love management. There is nothing about the ManageWithoutThem model which suggests that organisations should be unmanaged or that good managers shouldn't be rewarded with high salaries and more resources.

ManageWithoutThem simply shifts the emphasis to a values and market-based coordination paradigm rather than a command-based paradigm. Much like the difference between a socialist economy and a market-based economy. The secret to the ManageWithoutThem Model is to ensure that the internal markets which are created are aligned to the organisation's business model and strategy. If all organisations within an industry were laissez-faire organisations they might all be the same, and the competitive environment would be destroyed.

ManageWithoutThem focuses on governance in that it includes in it's definition of 'management' the mechanisms within the organisation which actually select who gets to be a manager. Without the right levels of transparency and appropriate checks-and-balances most organisations don't know how to distinguish between a good manager and a successful manager. And there is nothing particularly special about leadership in this regard - the same transparency and checks-and-balances are required to distinguish between a good and successful leader.

Many corporate governance books describe corporate governance as though it was nothing more than more management combined with the independence of the board. To strive for an independent board is to strive for a nonsensical ideal; and if governance is just seen as more management then what is managing the managers? And what is managing those managers?... And what is managing those managers?...

### Not Anti-Planning... Pro-Architecting

Coming soon...

### Not Technocratic... Anti-Luddite

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MWT Consulting

**Now the hype is over, it's time to \*really\* transform your company...**

The following market-based management and business transformation services are **coming soon**. They will be available through independent contractors affiliated with ManageWithoutThem.com.

- ManageWithoutThem Presentations
- Culture Coaches
- Organisational Usability Assessment
- Organisational Change Management
- IT and Web Development
- Recruitment Assistance
- Event Management

If you would like to be notified when these services become available please [subscribe](#) to our mailing list. If you would like to discuss MWT service offerings please [contact us](#).

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[Suggest a Core Concept](#)

## Core Concepts

ManageWithoutThem has, at its heart, a set of Core Concepts that are continually evolving. These Core Concepts attempt to reposition the view of management as a distributed process. Stay tuned as contributors expand and discuss these core concepts in future articles.

---

### **Your Organisation Doesn't Care Who Is Managing It**

Quite simply, the efficiency and effectiveness of your organisation does not depend on who is managing it or on who is making decisions. Your organisation's effectiveness depends only on the quality of the decisions being made and the actions they invoke.

Traditionally, 'management' was created to coordinate separate, but related activities created through the division of labor. The key to management is *coordination*, not any particular *who* of management.

(Value-added functions over-and-above simple coordination are, however, invaluable)

### **'Management' has always been a distributed function**

Always remember that the original purpose of management was to coordinate separate but related activities which resulted from the division of labor.

Management must therefore be integrated with those separate activities. Any value-added management functions need to be structured as (optional?) shared services. There should be no risk that shared services reduce individual responsibility and accountability.

---

**Organisational Usability! ([article](#))**

People create economic value, not organisations (just ask the late economist [Ludwig von Mises](#) or EDS CEO [Dick Brown](#)).

Your employees (or your clients directly) leverage the capabilities and

**Managers and All: Make Yourself Redundant**

It is the responsibility of each member of the organisation to use technology, process, innovation, and collaborative efficiencies to gain efficiencies and allow space for growth.

Each member of the organisation must realize that making -yourself- redundant doesn't mean you are no longer of value to the organisation. It means you have changed the organisation. It frees you to pursue other

resources of your organisation to create new value.

Using the analogy of web site usability your organisation's success is also dependent on its usability.

challenges or make the same changes in other business units.

---

### **Management Portals. Management as a Service**

In a ManageWithoutThem organisation most management functions are structured as optional shared services. Structuring management as optional shared services forces integration and collaboration of management functions. It also options up the possibility the internal organisational market evolving efficiencies in management functions as well as for individual functional performers.

### **Market-based Coordination within the organisation (the market doesn't stop at the firm)**

Why is the organisation the only entity in the economy that doesn't consider itself to be a market?

With the Internet and other technologies reducing transaction costs all the time, firms can now coordinate as a market economy instead of a command economy.

---

**Yes; it's all 'management's' fault!  
But, we are all 'management'**

There is no 'them' to blame in distributed management. You may well blame management for the failings of the organisation but management is everybody's responsibility and there always exists options for improvement.

**The Incredible Shrinking Management: Brand, Value, Projects, Competition, Markets. ([article](#))**

For management to become distributed it must change its perspective. No longer should it be seen to contain the rest of your organisation, rather it should again become an integrated part of the organisation.

Everybody needs to understand management concepts and how they relate to their role within the organisation. Everybody has a value-chain,

Faced with coordination problems the answer is to offer an alternative into the internal market.

everybody has intellectual capital, everybody has a brand, everything is a market...

---

**Better to be at war with your manager in the name of customer service and improved performance than it is to be at war with your customer in the name of outdated process and bureaucracy**

Don't be afraid to be your customer's advocate. If you *truly* know your client, and if you *truly* know a process is not appropriate for the situation or hurting the relationship with the client - then fight the right battle.

### **Employees as Customers**

Ever increasing workforce mobility and ever increasing choices, options, and access to information for employees. This means that *choice theory* applies to your employees as well as your customers

(but don't kid yourself)

---

**Leverage the Network. Not the Hierarchy**

The new *operational shape* of organisation is the network. Too many overlaps within your organisation will make rolling things up into a hierarchy an unnatural abstraction.

**We are not creating control mechanisms, we are creating organisms that don't die**

It is no longer enough to create a control structure or a process. In order to accommodate rapid change your structures, processes, business units, people, etc, must be adaptable. They must be *alive*. They must be able to adapt and improve *without* explicit, formal, intervention.

---

Disintermediation and Re-intermediation of Management

Management was originally a mechanism to coordinate separate but related activities brought about by the division of labour. Over the years management has become the ultimate middleman.

Everyone is responsible for their own  
Communication

---

**If your following up on 'This Stinks'  
you're already starting to  
self-manage**

**Don't Underestimate the power of proximity**

People who are physically, intellectually, or socially 'close' to you will appear much more clever than those who are 'far away'. Don't be too quick to judge - respect those you don't fully understand.

On the other hand, when you are 'far away' from somebody you evaluate their *results* - when you are 'close' you are more likely to evaluate only their *processes*.

---

### **Politics and Bullsh\*t are different**

The 'politics' of your organisation is simply the actions required to get things done within the organisation. If those actions are purely filling out forms, nepotism, deceit, and fear, that is more specifically bad politics .

Separate the good politics from the bad and name them. Perhaps some actions should be difficult to achieve as a safety check.

### **Avoid Level of Analysis Problems**

When thinking of management avoid the temptation to only see things from one perspective.

How does your approach seem when evaluated from a different perspective or level of analysis?

---

**Architecture / Content**

Self-organisation and growth require explicit focus on architecture.

People need to collaborate *around* something. In general they will provide *content* for the *architecture* they are collaborating around. Ensure you all

**The Document is Not the Requirements/Design/Project**

The document is not the requirements...  
(knowing the requirements requires a shared understanding)

The document is not the design...  
(the design is only complete after the neurons in peoples head have been rearranged)

have a shared understanding of the architecture.

The Internet has grow through massive collaboration around a shared architecture.

The document is not the Project...  
(and it is the project that must be managed)

---

**Away from 'Us' and 'Them' (Through 'I')**

**You can't tell people both 'What To Do' and 'How To Do It' (and then judge their performance)**

---

**Competence Beats Process**

In a ManageWithoutThem organisation all are willing to accept that if somebody is truly competent in what they do they will do it better than somebody who simply follows a process - however perfectly. Process assumes linearity where competence

**Collaboration through Specialists with a Shared Architecture Beats  
Collaboration through Generalists**

must encompass more. Process,  
however, may assist in coordination.

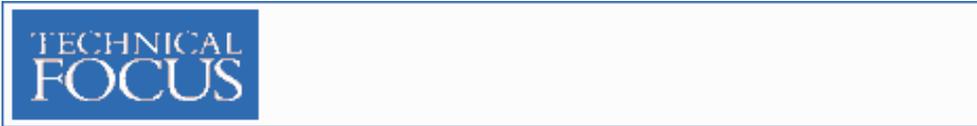
**Seamlessness is bunk! ([Article](#))**

---

Hey! What about...?  
([Suggest a new Core Concept](#))

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## Resources

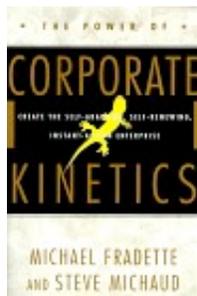
### Books

The following titles are invaluable resources in the quest to 'Manage Without Them'. Some provide an overview of traditional management concepts which will assist in 'The Incredible Shrinking Management' process. Others provide the new and unconventional insights which are more true to the Manage Without Them themes

You may click on the title to order any of the books from Amazon.com.



[The Individualized Corporation : A Fundamentally New Approach to Management](#)  
by Sumantra Ghoshal, Christopher A. Bartlett.



[The Power of Corporate Kinetics: Create the Self-Adapting, Self-Renewing, Instant-Action Enterprise](#)  
by Michael Fradette, Steve Michaud

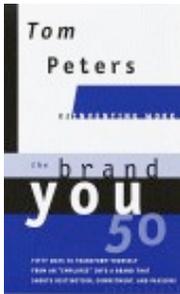
A practical and proscriptive model for building an 'instant action' enterprise. Examines the issues of leadership, network organisations and talent. The intention is to build an organisational structure poised to respond rapidly to, often unpredictable, 'market events' and 'customer events'.



[The Control Revolution: How The Internet is Putting Individuals in Charge and Changing the World We Know](#)  
by Andrew L. Shapiro, Richard C. Leone

A very balanced outline of the effects of individualisation, control, and mass customisation on society in general.

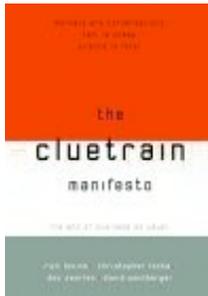
The only thing that Shapiro may want to think about is that if you have access to all sorts of information from all over the world it's sometimes more interesting to read two unbalanced perspectives than it is to read one balanced perspective.



The Brand You 50 : Or : Fifty Ways to...  
by Tom Peters.

This is a perfect representation of what ManageWithoutThem would call Micro-Branding and The Incredible Shrinking Management (Brand).

Tom Peters knows exactly what he is doing here; and it is very powerful.



The Cluetrain Manifesto : The End of Business as Usual  
by Christopher Locke, Rick Levine, Doc Searls, David Weinberger.

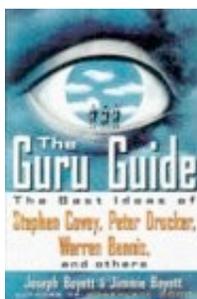
Interesting book by some very interesting personalities. The book connects business and management revolutions with the development of the Internet.

From a technological determinism perspective it examines the effects when the Internet allows 'connected workers' to communicate directly with 'connected markets' on a one-to-one basis.

From social constructivism perspective it suggests that the Internet and related communication technologies derive from a 'longing' for human contact and meaning.

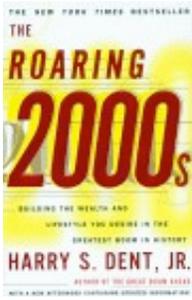
This is the book with brought concepts such as 'voice', 'conversations', 'hyperlinks subvert hierarchy', and 'markets are conversations' into the business and management dialogue.

Be warned, the book is a little 'theme-based' (as a colleague of mine once described it) in that it is a little repetitive and much of the later parts of the book can feel like conjecture on the first few chapters.



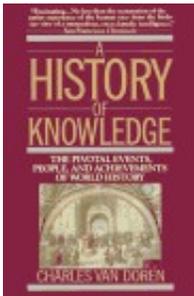
The Guru Guide : The Best Ideas of the Top Management Thinkers  
by Joseph H. Boyett, Jimmie T. Boyett.

Brush up on all those MBA classes.

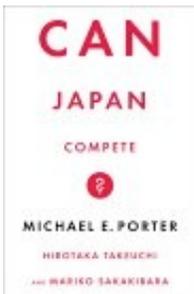


The Roaring 2000s : Building the Wealth and Lifestyle You Desire in the Greatest Boom in History  
by Harry S. Dent Jr.

In addition to the book's focus on real estate and investment strategies there is a very good introduction to 'network organisations'. Also, Dent introduces the concept of mapping the maturity of collectives (ie. society and organisations) in terms of Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs and other such frameworks more commonly associated with individual development.



A History of Knowledge : Past, Present, and Future  
by Charles Van Doren



Can Japan Compete?  
by Michael E. Porter

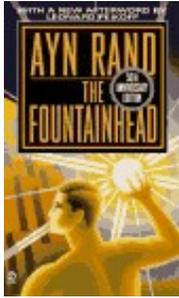
In this book Porter (of 'competitive advantage' fame) examines what has been the cause Japan's successes in the past, and the nature of its recent economic downfall as it entered a digital economy.

Porter determines that practices such as cartels, total quality management, best practices, lifetime employment, and design for manufacturability were not the characteristics that were separating Japan's successful industries from Japan's poorly performing industries.

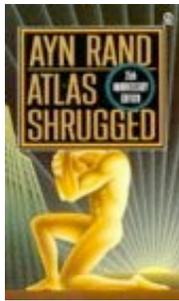
What is interesting is that many western organisations have since adopted the approaches used in Japan under the mistaken belief that the practices contributed to Japan's competitiveness. It could be that modern business's fascination with process is based on fallacy.

Porter goes on to identify distinctive strategy as the determining factor in Japan's successful industries (as he is prone to do).

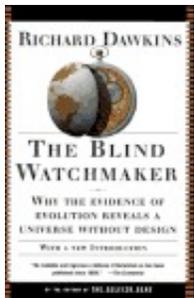
ManageWithoutThem has individual and corporate distinctiveness and strategy at its core.



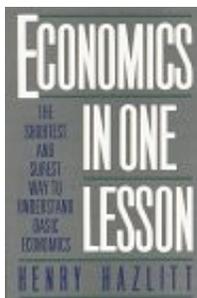
The Fountainhead  
by Ayn Rand



Atlas Shrugged  
by Ayn Rand



The Blind Watchmaker  
by Richard Dawkins



Economics in One Lesson  
by Henry Hazlitt

A classic introduction in economics. Introduces economics by addressing many fallacies of economics with clearly explained examples.

This book is also available in audiobook form from [Audible.com](http://Audible.com). This is the version I have and I've found it very entertaining to listen to.

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Resources

## Links

### EC 101 Macroeconomics Book

Howard Community College

[http://www.howardcc.edu/social\\_science/macrobk.htm](http://www.howardcc.edu/social_science/macrobk.htm)

To operate in a ManageWithoutThem environment you must stop thinking in terms of hierarchies and controls, and start thinking in terms of networks and markets. A very good Introduction to Macroeconomics downloadable book can be found on the Howard Community College web site.



### Ludwig von Mises

Austrian-American libertarian Economist

<http://www.mises.org>

His treatise on economics, [Human Action](#), is founded on the fundamental premise that all economic value is the result of the action of individuals. For Mises such intellectual abstractions as 'production forces' simply won't do. Human Action and other books by Mises are [available online](#).

Mises' 'belief in the power of the consumer' (from [britannica.com](#)) holds some valuable lessons for a digital economy where the customer rules.



### Enterprise Economy

"market-based perspective and information for business leaders"

<http://www.enterpriseeconomy.com>

This is less about market-based management than the effect of markets upon organisations.

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## Laissez Faire Books

<http://laissezfairebooks.com/>

ManageWithoutThem practitioners need to understand the relationship between freedom and responsibility. The ManageWithoutThem organisation needs to understand the correlation between a 'free market' and an efficient market. Fortunately, this is an area that is neither new nor unexamined - Laissez Faire Books is brimming with interesting stuff.

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**Peter G. Klein - New Institutional Economics (NIE)**

<http://encyclo.findlaw.com/0530book.pdf>

Great introduction to NIE! From the abstract: '... surveys the new institutional economics, a rapidly growing literature combining economics, law, organization theory, political science, sociology and anthropology to understand social, political and commercial institutions.'

This article is actually part of the [Encyclopedia of Law and Economics](#).

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## Arachnoid.com

<http://www.arachnoid.com>

A thought provoking site with some interesting quotes on the home page and a well reasoned article called The Levels of Human Experience. The author of the site makes the observation in his (?) Interview with an Extraterrestrial article that humans tend to *'think science can only be practiced by someone called a "scientist."*

Here at ManageWithoutThem will like to think that 'management' shouldn't be something that is only performed by 'managers' - so know where he is coming from.

---



**Chris Fox Inc.**

<http://www.chrisfoxinc.com>

Chris Fox is obviously a keen thinker who knows a lot about management. You can get a taste of his knowledge and experience on this informative web site. Chris provides an introduction to strategic management, project management, and innovation. Rich with insights into management and e.business.

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**Tayfun Demiroz**  
<http://www.tayfundemiroz.com/>

Tayfun understands the potential for 'knowledge markets', peer-to-peer connected individuals, and communities of practice to actually manage the organisation. He is the guru of creating realworld Corporate Communities.



**Chris Macrae - Brand Chartering and Brand Value Exchange**  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/melnet2/>

Chris is the guru of 'Brand Chartering' and 'live the brand' initiatives.



**Christopher Locke**  
<http://www.rageboy.com>  
<http://www.gonzomarkets.com/>  
<http://www.tdcrc.com>

Co-author of *The Cluetrain Manifesto* and author of *Gonzo Marketing: Winning Through Worst Practices*. He's inventing the Internet's answer to marketing and at lot more besides. Whatever it is he's doing to my brain I think I like it.

### University of Keele - Department of Management

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/mn/teach/>

Some of the *Course Material* on this site is available to the public. If you thought the possibility of a 'manage without them' management philosophy wasn't serious, take a look at some of this material.

Also, take a look at Question 3 on this Exam Paper. I'd be inclined to think that organisations can't do without *management*, but *managers*...? That is the eternal question.



**TomPeters.com**  
<http://www.tompeters.com>



**Fast Company**  
<http://www.fastcompany.com>



**Andrew Newman - 'More News'**  
<http://morenews.blogspot.com>

I'd been receiving an eclectic assortment of news and views from Andrew for years. So when he announced his blog as 'Instead of posting to all his friends Andrew is putting news and his view here instead' I figured he would be updating it every few weeks - the frequency with which he was emailing me - but he's updating this thing every day! What had I been missing out on!?!?! Andrew blogs about the IT industry and software development... about 20% of the time.





### ManageWithoutThem Posters

The ManageWithoutThem Poster Series provides the perfect artifacts for propagating our unique distributed management philosophy throughout your workforce. New posters will be added to the collection periodically.



To view the posters you will need Acrobat Reader (which you probably already have). If not, go to the Adobe site and [download it](#) (it's free).



#### I'm Sorry... Is my work interfering with your management again?

'I respectfully acknowledge your position in the hierarchy; but that in itself doesn't help us work together...'

(we're not anti-management; really we're not)

[PDF](#) / [ZIPed PDF](#)



#### The Document is Not the Project

The first in our series of posters is for the workplace that is too busy managing documents (and their approvals) to manage projects.

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Coming Soon...  
What is Management?

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I'm Sorry...

# Is my work interfering with your management again?

I respectfully acknowledge your position in the hierarchy; but that in itself doesn't help us work together. It doesn't have to be this way. We can work towards the same purpose. We all have value to contribute. But, I can't act on information I don't have. I can't spend all my time preparing reports. Management information is not management information unless it is shared. Only I know the information I need to do my job. A Strategy is not a Strategy unless we share it...

# THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE PROJECT!

...and it is the Project that must be managed, not the Document

## THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE REQUIREMENTS

Only the client knows what they want – or do they? Requirements are what the client will eventually want after they understand what they are going to get. The Requirements may never be fully known by everybody. They will change with perspective, level of analysis, and time.

## THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE DESIGN

The 'Design' is not complete until the neurons in the brains of the people who will implement it have been re-programmed. Or perhaps you haven't been designing at all. Have you?

## THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE RISKS

There are more risks than you'd care to manage centrally. But they don't go away just because nobody wrote them all down. And they don't go away just because somebody did.

## THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE ARCHITECTURE

The 'Architecture' is the shared understanding of the edges within a system (people, project, or product).

## THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE QUALITY

Your quality system may attempt to ensure quality; but the quality documents are not the *quality* of the project or the product.

Long live Documents! Let them facilitate communication – but what if they are wrong?

Their value comes from how closely they communicate what they represent.

What if they don't reflect reality? Will they reflect reality more if they are 'approved'?

Publish the document – *expose it to the market*. Its value will increase as it becomes closer to reality, facilitates more communication, and tests the author's understanding.

Hide a document and it has no value. Even once it is approved.

Of course, there is nothing better than a good document...

THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE VISION...  
THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE VALUES... THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE BRAND... THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE CULTURE... THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE PARTNERSHIP... THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE BUSINESS MODEL... THE DOCUMENT IS NOT THE POINT...

AND IF THE DOCUMENT IS YOUR PROJECT IT HAD BETTER BE FANTASTIC.



Your organisation doesn't care **who** is managing it!

[www.ManageWithoutThem.com](http://www.ManageWithoutThem.com)



## Thursday, February 15, 2007

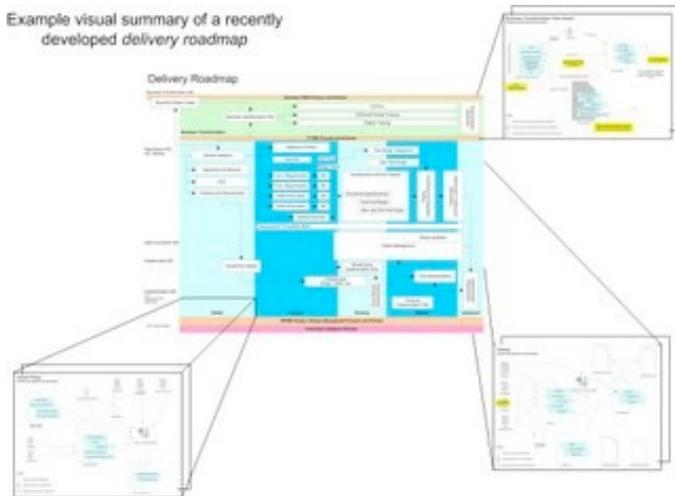
### [Twelve leverage points - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

[Twelve leverage points - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#): "Twelve leverage points"

posted by Matthew at [12:05 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Sunday, January 28, 2007

### Example delivery roadmap summary visual



note that the delivery roadmap (above) is not isomorphic to the solution architecture (below)



posted by Matthew at [3:50 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, August 21, 2006

### Outsourcing info from Gartner

Some interesting - if slightly obvious - information on outsourcing in this podcast from Gartner:  
[http://www.gartner.com/it/products/podcasting/asset\\_143953\\_2575.jsp](http://www.gartner.com/it/products/podcasting/asset_143953_2575.jsp)

I particularly like the host's usage of the word 'architecture' in a sense which matches my own usage (where I define architecture as 'deliniated shared understanding' and management as 'what collaborating individuals share').

The host also makes some interesting asides about a more structural view of 'service-oriented architecture' (as opposed to the IT view of S.O.A.); an area that I'm currently also drafting some notes / diagrams for.

Unfortunately, the guest uses the word 'seamless' which you all know I hate with a passion. :-)

posted by Matthew at [8:29 PM](#) | [3 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, March 21, 2006

### First draft of new article

#### Move along - Nothing to see here

*How workflow management at all levels can keep things moving even when the 'big picture' hasn't been fully thought through, is unseen, or is unknowable; and how market-making collaboration technologies might be able to 'seamlessly' add insight while you work.*

I've been thinking a little about the relationship between different types of workflow management. Within the broad category of workflow management I include personal workflow management, managerial workflow management, and

organisational workflow management. I've always had a bit of a problem with the idea of workflow management, but in the last couple of years I have developed an appreciation of the skills and practices of workflow management in each of these forms. So I thought it was time I expressed some positive views about an area of management science, for a change. Though I'd still like to draw attention to the risks of potential excesses in their application. Particularly, as these were the basis of my original concerns with the technique.

Workflow management, as a set of practices and either individual or organisation behaviors, is another example of management as a technology. One of the core concepts the ManageWithoutThem model is to recognise that management itself can be viewed as a technology. Like any other technology, management has a number of characteristics: it can be measured by its degree of usability, it must be learnt and used by all participants in order to add value, it may benefit from network effects, and it can be improved or made obsolete by other technologies. Workflow management is an evolving paradigm of organising and collaborating technologies that provides a pragmatic mechanism for moving forward and creating flow, without getting bogged down in over analysis, excessive planning, or overly vision-driven collaboration. It won't always be the most appropriate tool - but increasingly I'm starting to believe that it should always be part of every organising toolkit - it is necessary if perhaps not sufficient.

I've often cynically suggested that 'management is the art of complaining that nobody is seeing the big picture even when there isn't one'. I was referring to the tendency for management as a profession to use their unique perspective across the organisation to exclude and manipulate rather than to enlighten. As a manager, if you find yourself saying 'you're not seeing the big picture' it's likely that you've failed to communicate or otherwise engage your staff in a manner which highlights that perspective. If somebody was to pause and actually ask 'well what is the big picture?' you need to ask yourself if you could actually answer them and would you even be willing to spare the time to do so?

What does this have to do with workflow management? A lot, if you understand that I've always striven to see and articulate the big picture in all projects I've worked on. As an information or delivery architecture I have tried to ensure everybody knows how information or delivery processes respectively relate and flow through each other. This sort of work suits the analytical and architectural aspects of my personality but I'll be the first to admit that secret is know when to stop. The boundaries of architectural analysis - like the liberation idea of limited government - are what provide for effective allocation of resources, and release professional freedom and responsibility. My popular comments on the folly of 'seamlessness' in systems still stands and is also reflected in my analysis of management teams as cartels. It is the specific seams that you create in your delivery architecture which determine it's operating characteristics.

In many ways workflow management is the opposing and complementary force to architecture. To give a simple example of somebody I would call a workflow manager, picture a person who comes to a regular meeting you have been having for years. They proclaim to not know much about the work you are doing, and really can't provide any insight into how you departments or projects fit together. They seem almost proud of this absence of insight which immediately (and in a way rightfully - but we'll get to that another time) makes you hostile and cautious. Yet you know they have the support of the senior management team and a reputation for 'getting things down'.

But from the moment they start talking all they seem to be doing is creating work! You're already busy or at the very least don't see the value of the new and vague 'action items' you are receiving. But let's step back a little to this idea of 'creating work'. While nobody likes to do work that isn't of value there is a sense in which managers are in fact responsible for 'creating work'. Too much is often made of self-direction and taking personal responsibility. Indeed the ManageWithoutThem philosophy is a deep and practical manifestation of a market-based management model within firms. But at the end of the day it is more important that your management mechanisms have integrity. That is, beyond any particular management model what is most important is that the model is made explicit and the roles and responsibilities that cover both managers and non-managers are open and have actionable authority. It is that integrity which makes your operating model transparent and embeds the spirit of your claimed organisational values into your collaboration processes.

The implicit agreement between the workflow manager and the rest of the team is that the workflow manager is 'creating

work' so that those 'doing work' can just focus on getting that work done. The implication here is that as long as people are doing the work that has been created, and doing it in a timely manner, they don't need to worry about the big picture. They don't need to know how everything fits together and they can leave at 5 o'clock each afternoon with no guilt and no unfinished business. This approach to work may not suit everybody but it certainly has a place in everybody's work life. After all, if you want to stay at work all-night you probably want to be working on your own pet projects anyway.

In the above example we are talking about managerial workflow management. Below the level is personal workflow management and above that level is organisation workflow management. In managerial workflow management it is the willingness for the workflow manager to take responsibility for the end-to-end result that makes this managerial workflow management. In managerial workflow management the manager is actually putting a process and themselves between other individual's performance and the end result. In fact, this sort of action is the hallmark of managerial workflow and management in general. To allow others to do 'work' without knowing the big picture adds tremendous value in complex environments.

What is interesting is that Franklin was able to schedule hours of time labeled simply 'work'. Pre- my discovery of personal workflow management I would have found it pointless to schedule a vague activity like 'work' in my diary.

All this talk of 'work' as a tangible activity brings me to personal workflow management. Managerial workflow management adds value through separating the end results from each individual's performance. Personal workflow management does something quite different but related. I recently stumbled across references to Benjamin Franklin's daily schedules. These show how Franklin broke up his time during each day. What is interesting is that Franklin was able to schedule hours of time labeled simply 'work'. Pre- my discovery of personal workflow management I would have found it pointless to schedule a vague activity like 'work' in my diary. It would have meant nothing more than being at work. However, personal workflow management such as Getting Things Done means there is always something to do to 'create work' or already pre-created work that you could be completing. In Getting Things Done language there are always next actions for the context you are in or at least projects and lists to review.

Where the benefit of managerial workflow management is that you don't need to know the big picture in order to contribute, the benefit of personal workflow management is a little more, well, personal. David Allen, author of Getting Things Done, talks about 'mind like water'. He says the benefit of writing things down into his/a system is that you aren't thinking about the items when you should be doing them (as he said in his Cranky Middle Manager interview - 'there is an inverse relationship between on-your-mind and getting-done'). The accumulated benefit of this system is that you are always doing what you should be doing at the moment. All of this organising effort means that you can relax and just 'work'.

To make it even more personal than that, say you're at a point in your life where work isn't particularly important. Say you're burnt out, need a holiday, don't like your current assignment, have family problems at home you need to deal with - but need to work to pay the bills. Personal workflow management will allow you to get lost in work and get things done without being particularly interested in work. All of the office bickering, politics, and things you always wanted to change about work can actually be put on hold and ignored. This can be done for as long as you like - particularly if you give yourself time to record grips that you might one day want to fix in SomedayMaybe lists). You might even find that you like working this way or that it helps you meet career goals that have otherwise alluded you.

Before I move onto organisation workflow management I want to mention my objections to personal and managerial

workflow. Managerial workflow annoyed me because the people seemed proud of not knowing technical issues (even when they actually did know), they created work, and they didn't offer anything in terms of a better fundamental understanding of the situation. Personal workflow to me seems like over organisation and seemed to reduce some of the passion and personal professionalism I felt about work. In both of these cases the grips I had are actually also the post powerful features of these two types of workflow. However, they are both potential negatives if workflow management is used exclusively without also applying architectural thinking and skillsets.

Finally, let's consider organisation workflow. This is workflow across multiple departments and even organisations. Because of its grounding in information technology minds this sort of workflow is often implemented as form/document management systems with associated approvals, business process orchestration, and integration with various computer systems. I love the idea of integration between systems but this all starts to sound a little like automating a managerial and command-economy. Without the injection of a market-based coordination mindset organisation workflow becomes automated bureaucracy. Rather than market indicators and allowing the market to increase the transparency of your organisation, the over-litigation of existing organisational workflow management thinking may in fact cause the creation of workflow 'black markets' which drive effort off the systems and therefore reduce organisational transparency. IT systems should have their usability measured in terms of it being easier to use the system to do your job than it is not to use the system to do your job.

Social and collaborative web 2.0 sites such as Flickr, 43Things, myspace, etc give better clues as to what organisational workflow management should look like than say middleware software. I call these systems market-making technologies where the Web 2.0 terminology has become social networking technologies. I would suggest that social networking technologies are a subset of market-marking technologies.

The advantage of thinking of management as a technology means that you can apply criteria such as usability and enabler-of-transparency to improvements in that technology. Web 2.0 style tools that support workflow management processes at each level would enable more transactions to be carried out 'on the market' and therefore allow better information about the dynamics of the organisation to be gathered and published.

As the sophistication of automatic ontology generation tools improves, and as they better allow for additional manual explicit categorisation techniques and visualisations which allow architectural knowledge to contextualise the data we'll have somewhere to throw this market knowledge we are silently creating as people go about their daily work.  
posted by Matthew at [3:44 PM](#) | [2 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, October 10, 2005

### Cranky Middle Manager



Just a quick note to let you know that I appear on [The Cranky Middle Manager](#) Podcast with Wayne Turmel. After I have a listen I'll try and do a post of all the interesting stuff I wish I'd also said :-)

Thanks Wayne! It was fun.

posted by Matthew at [4:04 PM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, August 27, 2005

### Epic Advisers

Just found [Steve Banhegyi's blog](#). He mentions a leadership model (well part of it, I presume) with the acronym EPIC ADVISERS:

Emotion

Power

Inspiration

Charisma

Authority

Drama

Vision

Intention

Storytelling & Journey making

Experience

Role Modelling

Self-Perception

<http://www.emerging.co.za/transformblog/index.php?entry=entry050224-155811>

The MWT Model basically says 'What's so special about Leadership?' in a quite sarcastic way indeed. But that isn't to belittle the concept. What I'm saying is that the important thing is to be able to tell the difference between Quality leadership and... well, rubbish.

I'm not sure EPIC ADVISERS is 'particularly African' as Steve describes it. But I mean that in a good way in that it seems more universal to me. Sure, it's just a bunch of words. But it appears to be the right words for a change. There is a certain balance to this list of attributes which to me seems like it would be difficult to fake this type of leadership.

UPDATE: More detail [here](#) (pdf).

posted by Matthew at [7:57 AM](#) | [10 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, August 25, 2005

### I'll comment after I read it... But it's gotta be good

[Economic Development: An Individualist Methodology](#)

posted by Matthew at [5:19 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, August 22, 2005

### Smalltalk Tidbits, Industry Rants: XP debate

<http://www.cincomsmalltalk.com/blog/blog...>

#### Traversing the spec without a spec?

[Matthew De George] August 22, 2005 10:31:00 EDT

I'd agree that XP is a response to an organisational problem; but that is not all it is. I think just because it only solves the software organisation's problem doesn't mean it isn't part of the solution for larger organisational problems.

I'm trying to solve the larger organisational problem (at <http://www.managewithoutthem.com>) by starting with market-based management within firms. I think Scrum can be an example of this because it provides the sort of 'market indicators' required through things like burndown charts.

My theory is that when you are looking at an architecture (read 'delineated shared understanding') of the \*solution\* you shouldn't suppose that the best way to build that solution is to follow the same structural elements with which the solution is broken up. That is, the structure of the final solution and the structure of the process to get to that solution (the 'delivery architecture') are not isomorphic.

Actually, I'd go one step further than that. I'd suggest that the delivery architecture is exactly the opposite of the solution architecture. This is partially just saying that process is more important than product. Or that process is more important than planning (which is certainly a market-focused approach). But I think

there is more to it than that.

More importantly, if this is true - if you are trying to find a delivery architecture which is equally opposite to any possible solution architect - then why try to describe/specify the solution at all?

We have to change the way IT and clients interact certainly. IT systems are not just software programs. IT isn't just a shared service. IT is \*structural\*. An IT system is a part of your organisation just like a human resource or a partner or an org chart. There really needs to be a better understanding of this. I'm always confused when an ERP implementations biggest advantage appears to be that the finance department doesn't have to answer accounting questions anymore because the IT department is supporting the finance processes...

posted by Matthew at [7:32 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, August 10, 2005

### Seeing the big picture. Showing the little picture.

Some thoughts in the back of my mind as I develop estimates for a project I'm currently working on. All these numbers, contingencies, and risks. While I'm promoting market-based management and should be against "planning" what I'm really all about are the mechanisms for separating good planning from bad planning (sort of). I'm also concerned with exposing what limited information, what limited controls and enablers, are actually defined by a schedule and a resource plan.

But as limited as a schedule and resource plan are, they are many orders of magnitude more interesting than an estimate. With all the effort to reduce (or at least record) "Assumptions" an estimate is still, by definition, filled with assumptions. An estimate IS an assumption. I'm fortunate enough to be able to use some baseline productivity metrics which allows me to ignore huge chunks of the dynamics within the project for the purpose of my estimate. But one assumption I shouldn't make is that people will in some way "follow" the estimate.

When the estimate is complete it should be locked up in a box. Nobody needs to see this estimate. There should be 3 degrees of separation between this estimate and anything that 90% of the people on the project are doing at any particular time. If the project takes more resources than the estimate suggests the estimate is wrong - and yet, the estimate doesn't manage the project at all. Nor does it offer any hints at all on how to manage the project. This breaks The New MWT Hierarchy but I'll leave the risk analysis to the reader.

Some may ask "Shouldn't you show people the estimate so that they can "see the big picture"?". Certainly not. The estimate doesn't show the big picture. Like I said it actually contains very little information. If you have a "big picture" of your business model, or your project's delivery architect, or a well crafted contract then these things should be published. In fact you are obliged to publish them to your employees. But an estimate is simply an assumption.

Management needs to show people the small picture. I've decided that this wonderful technology we call management is failing if people have nothing more than an estimate or a deadline at their disposal when they sit down to focus on their work. It's also failing when they have a thousand contradictions in their head all relating to the same task. Like I always say "it's easier to tell 10 people what to do than to be told what to do by 10 people".

Iâ€™m all for big picture thinking and I really do think that an overall view is a vital component of management (these are the delivery and collaboration architectures Iâ€™m always going on about after all). But what Iâ€™m saying is that management is failing if that is all it has to offer.

I guess this is just another example of â€˜the riddle of the stonesâ€™; where management thinking has become so muddled that it craves generalists such that the structure of the organisation doesnâ€™t really matter. Preferably, mythical generalists who can apparently do just about anything with equal effectiveness but for some strange reason stay where they are put â€˜and do what they are told. Much like a stone.

There is a contradiction here if I donâ€™t add one other point. How can I be advocating market-based management and then suggest that the management system of an organisation needs to be responsible for the muddled thoughts of an individual sitting down to do work alone? But there is not contradiction. Iâ€™m just repeating, as always, that we are all part of this management process. While that unavoidable hierarchy of responsibility always flows up, we are all integrated.

Too often I see layers upon layers of management and months of planning reduced to asking a strange little man in the corner who only got the task this morning why he isnâ€™t finished yet.

posted by Matthew at [8:26 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, July 28, 2005

### **The McKinsey Quarterly: From push to pull: The next frontier of innovation**

I can't read this without membership. However, this is a very important part of MWT. This is like 'you are responsible for your own communication' (see core concepts in the 'MWT Model' area). Subscribe models are also important but first need to push something that can be subscribed to... [The McKinsey Quarterly: From push to pull: The next frontier of innovation](#): "From push to pull: The next frontier of innovation

- \* Most companies now mobilize resources by deploying push systems, in the mistaken belief that they promote efficiency.
- \* Push systemsâ€™ characterized by top-down, centralized, and rigid programs of previously specified tasks and behaviorâ€™ hinder participation in the distributed networks that are now indispensable to competitive advantage.
- \* More versatile and far-reaching pull systemsâ€™ characterized by modularly designed, decentralized platforms connecting a diverse array of participantsâ€™ are now starting to emerge in a variety of arenas.
- \* As pull systems reach center stage, executives will have to reassess almost all aspects of the corporation."

posted by Matthew at [7:18 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, July 23, 2005

### **Josh Kaufman: Inside My Bald Head: The Personal MBA 40**

Perhaps the Personal MBA could be converted to an Open-MBA... [Josh Kaufman: Inside My Bald Head: The Personal MBA 40](#): "Great list!

I would also add Mintzberg's The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning. So glad you included Economics in One Lesson (it's certainly on my recommended reading list but you'd expect that with my market-based ManageWithoutThem model).

Perhaps Mises' Human Action could be in the Doctorate programme. Adding some other classics like Bastiat's The Law might make it an open-MBA...?

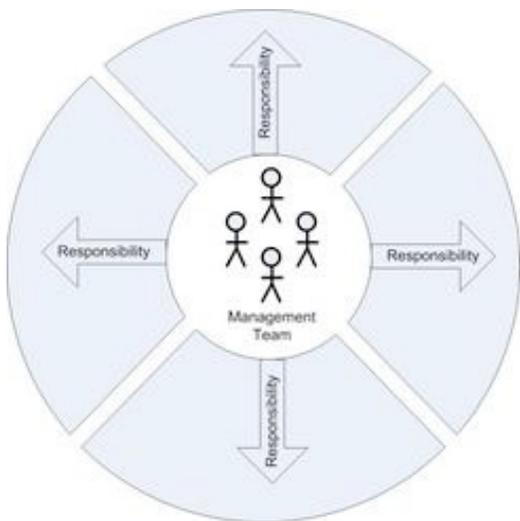
Posted by: Matthew De George at July 24, 2005 01:07 AM"

posted by Matthew at [10:09 PM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Management Teams as Cartels

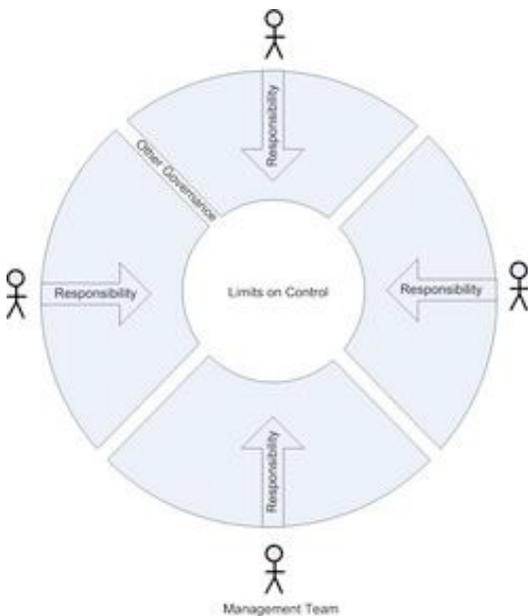
In addition to The New MWT Hierarchy I'd like to introduce the management team transformation slides. I've always had a slight problem with the idea of a 'management team'. To me the same economic analysis which applies to a cartel applies to a management team.

Before: Management Team as Cartel



Management Team as Cartel

After: Management Team with Governance



Management Team with Governance

Annotations coming soon...

posted by Matthew at [12:45 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#)

## Friday, July 22, 2005

### Harry Potter Book 7 Revealed \*spoilers\*

I haven't read any of the Harry Potter books, but I have seen two of the movies and read a review of the latest book that contained "spoilers". So it's painfully obvious to me now what the final book will be about and what J.K. Rowling's ultimate plan for our children actually is.

Before I get to what will appear in the final book let's look at the cunning precedents that Rowling is establishing in our hearts and minds which will allow her to achieve her ultimate goal. Which it is now clear, is the corruption of children everywhere.

Look at how each new Potter release is accompanied by increasing amounts of security and miscommunication about details of the plot. For the final book it is expected that this secrecy will have been perfected. No reliable details of the plot will be available until half the world's children have already completed reading the book.

False rumours and extracts will appear on the Internet weeks before the release. It will be denied by Rowling but these rumours will have been started by Rowling herself. They will serve to render the impression that this is just another harmless children's story that only a Pope would have objections to.

So why is this secrecy so important to Rowling. Because in the final Potter novel Harry's true character will be revealed. Currently, the goodness of Harry rests on the fact that it is set up against the evil of "You-Know-Who" (Voldemort). You-Know-Who allegedly killed Harry's parents when Harry was still a baby.

When I read that Dumbledore had been killed in the latest book it all became clear to me. Some may think that Dumbledore will just come back again in the next book like he did when he died in the Lord of the Rings movie â but Iâm sorry Dumbledore is gone for good.

In fact it is Dumbledoreâs death that finally draws Harry to the dark side. Yes; thatâs right Harry will convert to the dark side of the force in the final book! He couldnât save his parents, then he couldn't save his godfather, and then he couldnât save Dumbledore. Only the dark side give will give him power over death. This is a power that he canât live without.

But who really killed Harryâs parents? The story is that You-Know-Who couldnât kill Harry. Why is that do you think is? We know now that itâs because You-Know-Who IS Harry. It was indeed âhis motherâs loveâ that saved Harry. His mother who helped turn Voldemort into Harry (making Voldemort âdisappearâ except when Harry is around). Harryâs internal struggles being depicted in the physical world when Harry âfightsâ Voldemort.

I wont spelt the rest of this theory out in detail because itâs actually quite obvious. But it should be noted that Harry has often been referred to as âthe chosen oneâ. Those in the know believe that Harry will save the [re]public from dark magic. We all know that such prophecies can be misinterpreted...

Anyway. Enough of that. This is what Rowling has planned for your children to readâ !..

:-)

posted by Matthew at [7:46 PM](#) | [10 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## MWT Book Extract - Governance, Hierarchy, and the Delivery Architect

### Unavoidable Hierarchy of Responsibility

Hierarchies are powerful organising constructs. One of the assumptions people often make about the MWT Model is that if it is market-based it must also be against hierarchical organisation. This is not true as hierarchical organisation is an important feature of corporate governance. Without the overriding principle that the CEO and Board are ultimately responsible for the organisationâs performance (and the organisation's overall impact on society) there can be no corporate governance. The unavoidable hierarchy of responsibility draws a line from each employee, through their managers, directly to the Board.

It is the unflinching burden of this hierarchy of responsibility that often causes the best-seller lists for management books to be dominated by what are essentially self-help books for people in positions of power and responsibility. Indeed, much of the management profession has been developed to push this burden of responsibility down the hierarchy. This is different to delegation. Delegation, or rather the correct distribution of decision rights, is by definition always a positive contribution to the organisationâs effectiveness. Distribution of decision rights is in fact enabled through the hierarchy of responsibility. If a manager is ultimately responsible regardless of delegations then there is no point restating the managers responsibilities and calling it management. This is what subtlety occurs with Single Point Management (see Chapter xxx). In a sense, when I say 'management is the process of determining which decisions don't have to be made by consensus' I am also saying that management is the process of determining which decisions don't have to be made by the manager.

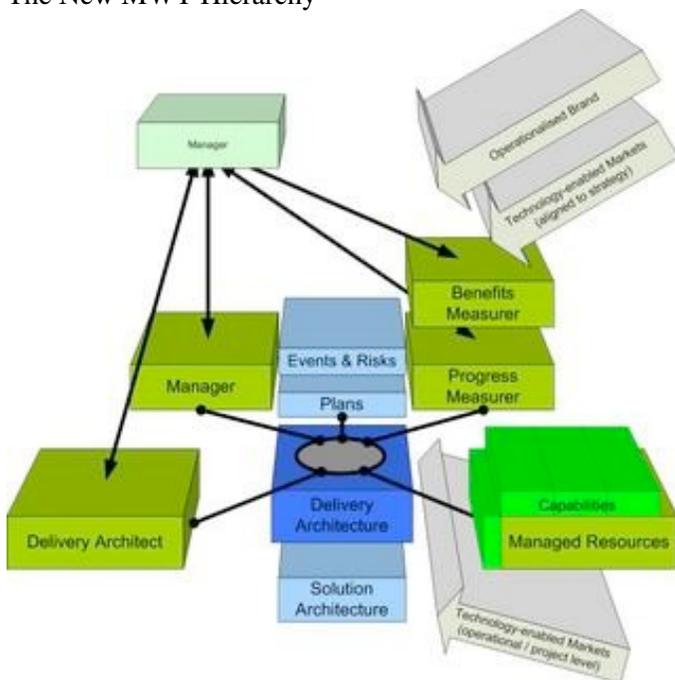
Management should always involve the organised delegation of responsibilities. You will often hear that you can delegate responsibility but not accountability (or something like that). This management truism is indeed true. What it is saying is

that the manager is always accountability even though they have given the task to somebody else. The problem arises when the one class within an organisation (in this case that class is the management class) has both the right to delegate and the right to judge capability. This violates the MWT principle to 'make management one step removed from measurement'. Too often I have seen managers attribute their failure to 'unskilled resources' and too often this is the case when those same resources have been working for the manager for months or even years. Though not always the case in well matrixed organisations and project, managers are responsible for the capabilities of their people so blaming your resources for failure is not an option.

Market-based management partially solves this problem by providing mechanisms for people to choose their managers. However, this is not an ideal solution as it will mean that truly challenging endeavours will never be resourced. Also, as discussed in Chapter xxx, competitive differentiation and alignment to strategy would be ineffective under a strictly market-based management model. In order to resource truly difficult endeavours and maintain a strategy of differentiation, you have to strictly follow the rule that if a subordinate is responsible then the manager is also responsible.

Due credit should be given to organisations who try to solve this governance problem with such mechanisms as '360 degree' assessments and other elements of a comprehensive performance management processes. In fact, even the very existence of a human resources department is supposed to provide a mechanism for resolving problems with managers who have taken advantage of the largely political relationship between the manager and the managed which allows their own failings to be exploited and reframed as leadership. However, the problem with 360 degree assessment and reliance on a separate human resources department is that these involve interventions. As mentioned in Chapter xxx, any management model which relies on interventions cannot improve corporate governance because managers control resource allocation and therefore they control which interventions are resourced. So in effect they control which interventions occur. If those resource allocations are ineffective (from the organisations perspective) the interventions simply wont occur and the risks to effective corporate governance will not be managed.

The New MWT Hierarchy



The New MWT Hierarchy reinforces the idea of an unavoidable hierarchy of responsibility. More importantly it provides a more comprehensive explanation of the forces which are already acting within the management hierarchy. The New MWT Hierarchy should be considered a management pattern (in the sense of Christopher Alexander's A Pattern Language as discussed in Chapter xxx). In the diagram for this pattern each of the olive green components are a different person performing a different role. It is important that these are physically different people. It is only then that the correct

incentives are in place for the pattern to work.

However, some will correctly note that this is overkill for smaller organisations or projects. It is true that this pattern evolves too many people to be suitable for small organisations. However, it does more effectively represent the forces which need to be in place to govern the hierarchy. It is only because the risks are smaller in smaller organisations that roles can be combined into less resources. It may even be possible that the roles are combined into a single manager. This is of course exactly what the traditional view of a management hierarchy would suggest. But I believe that in all cases where the roles are combined a risk is introduced. It is only because management practices have developed an unquestioned value proposition unto themselves that this idea of risk management within the management model will be unintuitive to many. This is why risk management within the management model is such an important component of the MWT Model.

Note also that it is not just the size of the organisation that indicates the roles should be separated into different people. Other risks such as the combining of diverse capabilities with a new collaboration / delivery architecture also indicate that separate people in each role should be used. Also, any time when an independent project management firm is used to manage other firms the roles should be separate people (or perhaps separate firms).

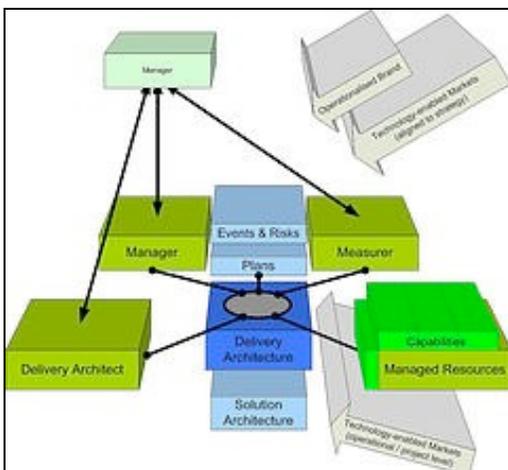
It might also be the case that a strong general manager will require a separate delivery architect to supplement their general management skills with domain or task-specific skills. There is a long standing argument about whether a good manager can manage anything. The answer to this is 'it depends'. An understand of The New MWT Hierarchy allows the decision to be made by assessment of the managers skills in relation to the domains they are managing. The discussion on the relationship between the manager and delivery architect will make that clear.

The individual components of the diagram are introduced in the section below. As for all MWT collaboration architectures (as The New MWT Hierarchy is simply a generic collaboration architecture) in addition to the component descriptions a set of traversals across components will also be provided.

posted by Matthew at [8:15 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, July 12, 2005

### New MWT Hierarchy



### New MWT Hierarchy

Originally uploaded by [MatthewD42](#).

I'm developing the general MWT hierarchy. This introduces the domain-specific delivery / collaboration architecture which supplements the 'plans and events' focus of general [project] management. The MWT hierarchy is also driven by the core concept to separate management from measurement.

posted by Matthew at [5:27 PM](#) | [3 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Sunday, July 10, 2005

### Natural Law and Order

Hans-Hermann Hoppe is always interesting. Sit back and listen to [a great introduction](#) to natural law, property and easements, and the evolution of natural law into the order provided by feudalism. It's a fascinating trip through history. Unfortunately he runs out of time before he finishes the lecture.

Even if you don't enjoy the content you could make a drinking game out of the number of times he says 'So to speak' :-)

Found in [Mises media](#).

posted by Matthew at [3:54 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, July 08, 2005

### Why are programmers supposed to know everything?

Interesting rant called [Programmers Need To Learn Statistics Or I Will Kill Them All](#). My immediate reaction was to see this as just another example of people being upset that programmers don't know everything.

To wish that programmers knew everything is generally a waste of time (how could they?). But I think this guy is onto something - I just don't yet know what it is. There is certainly something wrong with the way many IT people think the world works which comes out when they try to manage.

posted by Matthew at [9:55 PM](#) | [2 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

### David Crow: Why software development is not only programming

There is a void between programming and software development. In the absence of good software development management the struggles of that void are taken up by the programmers. Unfortunately, when that struggle becomes too much of a burden for the programme to bare the programmer is taken to be incompetent when in reality it is the unmanaged void that was too blame... [David Crow: Why software development is not only programming](#): "Successful software development is so much more than programming. Or maybe better put programming is so much more than being able to write code."

posted by Matthew at [9:48 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, July 04, 2005

### Sarbanes-Oxley and Internal Markets

Something I've never commented on in the Blog before (though it appears in the MWT Book manuscript / notes) is the relationship between Sarbanes-Oxley and the technology-enabled markets which are one of the foundation pillars of the ManageWithoutThem Model. I'm not a lawyer. So nobody should take my opinions as legal advice. In fact, anybody trying to Google for legal advice should be very careful indeed...

Sarbanes-Oxley is all about the retention of records. It started because some audit company is supposed to have shredded the audit records of one of their clients. If you look at the Mises Blog I think you will find one of the few references to the fact that the charges against the audit company have seen been dropped (Is this right? Check Mises Blog). However the ruling still exists and organisations are scurrying to comply with it.

The thing is Sarbanes-Oxley doesn't just stop at retention of records. The intension of the ruling includes both retention of records and assurances that the records are accurate. This bit is important and interesting. It means that audits are required at some regular interval to ensure that the records are accurate.

Let's take a simple example of asset records. Just as most organisations are struggling to keep simple records of the assets that they own, the Sarbanes-Oxley ruling says you have to audit the records to make sure they are accurate. So every three years you have to collect all the information about your assets again.

I have to be clear here; you can't just download the information from your asset register. The purpose of the audit is to ensure that the asset register is correct. So you need something to compare the information in the asset register to. So every three years you have to ask everybody in your organisation what assets they have - even if you think you already know. This is the only way you can make sure and prove that you already know.

While the intension is arguably good this is clearly ineffective. I also think it's not sustainable. Also, I think the risk here is that organisations can still fudge the audit. To take an extreme example, the organisation could fake all of the collected records by writing a small script which takes the asset register and turns it into emails. The script could throw in some mismatches so it looks realistic, the mismatches could be resolved, and the organisation would have compliance.

So in a way the law doesn't really guarantee real compliance. This means that eventually one of three things will happen. The most unlikely is that the government will decide not to interfere anymore. Alternatively, the intent of the law will be made more clear and additional laws will be created to cover individual cases of fraud (the typical approach of law propagation). Or lastly, the courts might shift the focus from 'reporting requirements' (what you have to submit) to 'operating requirements' (how your organisation actually has to work).

I'm betting on the last scenario where 'operating requirements' are imposed. And this is where technology-enabled markets come in. The scenario I'm going to describe is 5 to 10 years into the future. Even though the technologies largely exist it will take that long for the law, and our transition from command-based management models to market-based management models, to catch up.

A technology-enabled market approach to enforcing impending 'operating requirements' with the same intent as Sarbanes-Oxley would look like this...

--- To be continued ---

posted by Matthew at [11:07 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Aloha! What's in a name?

This is a quickly typed response to [Rosa's comments](#) on [my comments](#) about the [ChangeThis manifesto](#) which accompanies her book [Managing with Aloha](#) . In my comments I might have accidentally kinda sorta let slip that I didn't like her title. Actually, I think close to half of my comments were either 'I haven't read it all' or 'I don't like the title' . Oh, and then I went on to talk about me and what I think... Oops :-)

From what I've read [Managing with Aloha](#) sounds like a great way to manage. There is nothing I don't like about it yet (Mind you I still haven't finished reading even the [ChangeThis manifesto](#). And don't yet own the book.). I think if a manager learns its lessons and genuinely adopts the principles they will become a better manager - simply because the principles represent a better way to manage. I hope the book is very successful (perhaps it already is).

So what don't I like about the title? Fact is, I don't dislike the title quite as much now I've (almost) read the manifesto. And the reasons are touched on about a third of the way through the manifesto. I didn't know the real meaning of [aloha](#) . So when I read the title of the book I think I subconsciously read it as [Managing with jolly and mindless enthusiasm](#) . Now I'm all for enthusiasm; but when I read the title it sounded like another quick fix. So I'm glad I read further because it's made me realise something.

What it made me realise is that there is a place for quality management books for people who genuinely want to be better managers. Books for people who aren't just interested in being [more successful](#) managers. What I realised is that I probably under-estimate the number of people who genuinely want to become better managers just for the love of management - and that's unfair of me. I tend to be very hard on managers (though some would say I'm a little [soft](#) on people who actually report to me - unless they are managers).

My focus in my research for my book (and the way I tend to read organisations) is only partially about looking at what managers are individually doing. Like I said in the original post about the [Aloha manifesto](#), my thinking is part technology, part economics, and part values. So when I think of a management model I think of not only of what individual managers are doing but also what mechanisms (or [institutions](#)) exist in the organisation to ensure that the best management behaviours are the ones that are rewarded and encouraged. In other words, my definition of management actually touches on governance - that is, what managers the managers?

When I read the title [Managing with Aloha](#) I immediately thought it was going to be a shallow effort with little to offer management science. Something similar the [Fish! philosophy](#) (sorry Pike Place Market). That is, harmless enough but adding little to the science of management or the theory of what makes organisations effective. But the content in 'Aloha' doesn't appear to be like that. [Managing with Aloha](#) really does sound like the mentor-in-a-book it claims to be - directed at people who have decided to personally become better managers. And why not stop there? My problem is that I want to change the world - and I'm sure Rosa does too. I'd hate to see a poor manager faking the [Managing with Aloha](#) messages. Hopefully I can contribute in a way that means managers who are [Managing with Aloha](#) , 'Managing Without Them', and similarly-styled managers are the ones that get the resources.

So perhaps I would have been more interested in the book if it was called [Managing with unconditional love](#) . I at least would have understood the book more intuitively from that title. But I probably still wouldn't have bought it! Or at least I would have had to buy it with a copy of [Business Leadership the Marine Corps Way](#) just to keep my street credibility (And this is me talking. The only Australia who doesn't love sport and who owns two [Jewel](#) albums).

Lastly, I don't think I'm the only one who has misread the title. Take a look at the first comment at the bottom of [Slacker Manager Bren's post](#) on the manifesto:

#### COMMENTS

Is the Aloha book "new age"?

Posted by: [George](#) | July 3, 2005 08:51 AM

**Updated:** I have the manifesto open in front of me now and would also like to say I agree entirely that the premature and faulty condescension Rosa sights around the whole leadership versus management issue is disturbing. For the same reasons but also a different one. I agree that we need both leaders and managers and they are different skills. However, this is also related to the expanded scope I apply to management. I say "What's so special about leadership?" as we are still left with the same problem: What mechanisms decide who are the genuine leaders? Without the right levels of transparency within the organisation the criteria isn't always effectiveness...

posted by Matthew at [7:27 AM](#) | [3 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, July 02, 2005

### ChangeThis - Managing With Aloha

I haven't read it all yet but the '[Managing with Aloha](#)' ChangeThis manifesto is excellent. I was never interested in the book because I really don't like the title. But now I'm interested.

Actually, the MWT book is part technology, part economics, and part values. Aloha seems to cover the values side with the same approach I am.

posted by Matthew at [11:46 PM](#) | [5 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, June 29, 2005

### Requirements Ridicule - the other requirements denial

There is another type of [requirements denial](#). I've noticed this in the past but I didn't know how common the phenomenon was. I think I'll call it *Requirements Ridicule*. It's probably an indication of more substantial communication issues between the client and the vendor but Requirements Ridicule is a symptom that is easy to spot.

Requirements Ridicule is when the client requests a requirement and the vendor, rather than try to understand the drivers for the requirements and work through any communication issues, immediately interprets the requirement as the most ridiculous nonsensical self-contradicting statement that the client could have possibly meant. The vendor then immediately says the requirement doesn't make sense.

For most IT projects, where the client isn't an expert in requirements analysis or software development, this practice is entirely inappropriate. The client will still want the requirement to be met; but it's likely that it's either not the true requirement or has been misinterpreted by the vendor. As the vendor isn't trying to determine the real requirement what is actually implemented will most likely be ridiculous.

Not only is the implementation of the requirement likely to be ridiculous but the vendor will be out to prove that the requirement is ridiculous. Developers will decide they are not responsible for implementing this requirement with any degree of quality because it is inherently ridiculous. In fact the long suffering developer (who in large projects isn't to blame because they didn't collect the requirements) will tell their manager that the requirement is probably not what the client really wants but the manager tell them to develop it anyway.

In the end, developers wont consider that deadlines apply to the implementation of this requirement because it is so inherently ridiculous that of course it's going to take a long time to implement! I'm not blaming developers here, by the way. I rarely condemn developers as they have already been condemned to a life of confusion and frustration working for bad IT managers.

posted by Matthew at [5:42 PM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, June 28, 2005

### A business transformation checklist

From an unlikely source perhaps (the 'Army Enterprise Integration Oversight Office') we see an [interesting high-level checklist for business transformation](#). The fact that it is in a circle doesn't really add any value but it's pretty. And it's a good starting point for planning a business transformation programme in a government organisation...

It also provides an interesting quote about where the risks might be for enterprise resource planning (ERP) implementations:

In a [survey of CEOs](#) who had recently implemented ERPs, 73% identified cultural and organization factors as the risks (high or very high risk), compared to 41% identifying business and process factors as carrying an equivalent risk, and 27% identifying the same level of risk for technology and system factors [22](#). These results reveal the importance of investing budget and resources for transformation management services for all phases of an ERP or CBPI program. An effective transformation management program increases the likelihood that a project will be completed successfully and anticipated benefits are delivered.

posted by Matthew at [6:38 AM](#) | [2 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, June 23, 2005

## "Requirements Denial"

"Because no-one takes an independent view of whether the user requirements have been correctly stated, and whether the project [as] built is going to satisfy them, many projects contain a huge but undefined and unrecognized element of risk. This doesn't mean that they will all fail, but when they do, the results can be spectacular... This failure is known as 'requirements denial'"

[Top-Consultant.com - Global Opportunities in Consulting](#)

posted by Matthew at [10:05 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, June 22, 2005

### Darrell Norton's Blog [MVP] : Modeling Artifacts (different ways of modeling)

[Darrell Norton's Blog \[MVP\] : Modeling Artifacts \(different ways of modeling\)](#): "Modeling Artifacts (different ways of modeling)

Scott Ambler has a great page that lists 35 modeling artifact types. The page links to summary descriptions of a wide variety of modeling artifacts. Each page describes the artifact, provides an example or two, and provides links to suggested resources. In this list he also indicates if the technique is simple enough for stakeholders to learn, whether it is usually a paper-based artifact, whether he suggests creating it on a whiteboard, and what type of software he would consider using to create and maintain it. "

posted by Matthew at [8:14 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Single point management #2

I've never really been a fan of what I call [single point management](#) (SPM). This is where a manager thinks that just because they have responsibility for something that means that everything relating to that function must go through or be approved by them.

This approach is okay for taking control of a situation or assessing the current state but it doesn't really do anything for the organisation or the advancement of management theory.

But my main problem with single point management isn't that it is inefficient and completely ignores advances in communication tools (or even legacy communication tools like CC'ing emails). My main problem with the single point management approach is its effect on governance.

I tend to define governance in very simple terms as what managers the managers do. Under this definition of governance the single point management approach gives a manager the opportunity to avoid responsibility.

Take for example the case where a quality manager says I'm the quality manager so all work products must come

to me for review. In the event that a defective product is released into production or to the market the quality manager is, by definition, responsible. However, by using a single point management approach the quality manager will undoubtedly have a way of avoiding responsibility. The chances are that the quality manager can point to an instance where a work product was not submitted for review and approval. Alternatively, the quality manager can claim that they didn't have time to review and approve all the work products being sent to them.

So while the single point management approach might be an effective strategy for the individual manager it is actually bad management. In this case the forces that are actually managing the organisation (eg. what collaborating individuals share) are those of poor governance.

Like I've said Management by inspecting - Governance by sampling. Managers must ensure they met their responsibilities without reviewing all work products.

posted by Matthew at [6:37 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#)

## Saturday, June 18, 2005

### Cities as Information Management; Management as Information Management

I'm finally getting around to reading Steven Johnson's Emergence. I understand I'm late to the party here but I figured Emergence would be something that I would agree with too much for me to learn anything from. I tend to agree with (though not always follow) the Jason Pettus Healthy Reading Pyramid (TM) in this regard.

Emergence has turned out to be very agreeable reading. Not just because I agree with most of it intuitively already, but because it's so well written and the examples it uses feel classic and timeless.

There are also lots of things in the book that relate to ManageWithoutThem core principles. In fact, back when I was tinkering with these ideas from a management perspective, Johnson was actually writing his more general book on Emergence!

I want to quote a couple of paragraphs from Emergence. They are not the most interesting or enlightening but they are the most related to ManageWithoutThem. Specifically they relate to:

- Organisational Usability. This comes from the idea that people need to use the resources provided by the organisation just as much as the organisation uses the people in the organisation. This applies to both people using the organisation externally and internally. Organisational usability takes the metaphor of good web design (for example) and applies them to the organisation. Use or frame, consistency of branding, related items, links, recommendations, etc all have a metaphor in actual organisation of companies.
- Information management IS management. This refers to the fact that while we tend to trying to find new things that we need to manage all the time i.e. WHAT we manage (people, risks, issues, knowledge, customers, supply chains, etc) - we don't often change HOW we manage. ManageWithoutThem focuses exclusively on that transformation of HOW we manage. One important component of that is the need not to manage information but to manage BY information.

The passages below, taken from Emergence, touches on both of these ideas from the perspective of cities. They also show how Emergence is all about the same self-organising forces that drive the ManageWithoutThem model.

There are manifest purposes to a city — reasons for being that its citizens are usually aware of: they come for the protection of the walled city, or the open trade of the marketplace. But cities have a latent purpose as well: to function as information storage and retrieval devices. Cities were creating user-friendly interfaces thousands of years before anyone even dreamed of digital computers. Cities bring minds together and put them into coherent slots. Cobblers gather near other cobblers, and button makers near other button makers. Ideas and good flow readily within these clusters, leading to productive cross-pollination, ensuring that good ideas don't die out in rural isolation.

And another from the same chapter...

The neighbourhood system of the city functions as a kind of user interface for the same reason that traditional computer interfaces do: there are limits to how much information our brains can handle at any given time. We need visual interfaces on our desktop computers because the sheer quantity of information stored on our hard drives — not to mention on the Net itself — greatly exceeds the carrying capacity of the human mind. Cities are a solution to a comparable problem, both on the level of the collective and the individual. Cities store and transmit useful new ideas to the wider population ensuring that powerful new technologies don't disappear once they've been invented. But the self-organizing clusters of neighbourhoods also serve to make cities more intelligible to the individuals who inhabit them — as we saw in the case of our time-travelling Florentine. The specialisation of the city makes it smarter, more useful for its inhabitants. And the extraordinary thing again is that this learning emerges without anyone being aware of it. Information management — subduing the complexity of a large-scale human settlement — is the latent purpose of a city, because when cities come into being their inhabitants are driven by other motives, such as safety or trade.

Emergence is recommended reading for any manager.

posted by Matthew at [8:39 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#)

## Friday, June 17, 2005

### No ID for IT

[Australian IT - Tech courses in trouble \(Simon Hayes, JUNE 14, 2005\)](#): "Bond University decided last week that the faculty of information technology had to go, and it was dumped with little fanfare and even less publicity."

I spend my working life implementing systems that support businesses or government organisations. Don't get me wrong - I do understand that information technology must support business or government activities. In the commercial world there isn't a lot of room for technology for technology's sake. And although it's rarely managed well, the business world already understands research and development, and commercialising innovation, so there is already a place for pure IT in business.

However, the thought of universities removing the IT faculty altogether and making it 'part of business' is ridiculous and risky. Even before this move I have noticed a trend towards second year IT students being unable to perform simple programming tasks. University courses are already filling their information technology courses with business subject at the expense of IT knowledge.

There is tremendous room for improvement in IT courses. But giving up and simply teaching business or general management is not the answer. IT courses could benefit from aligning to the huge diversity of IT roles already within the

IT industry that aren't addressed by their courses. There are few IT courses that will help you be a 'solution architect', 'delivery architect', 'enterprise architect', 'business analyst' (at a senior, business-industry-focused level), 'Programme Director' (with specific IT industry knowledge), etc...

The article I've linked to references a trend downwards in enrolments in IT courses. Other reports are showing an increasing demand for IT professionals. While this might be the result of a phase shifted demand and supply cycle that isn't the only interpretation. My guess is that the already existing trends of dumbing down IT to include too much business or General Management for Dummies actually means that non-IT graduates are more valuable to the market.

If universities are serious about taking on the challenge of providing enough skilled resources to the IT industry they can't give in just because nobody wants to enrol in their courses. To meet their obligations to society the universities need to ensure their courses are of a high enough quality to make students want to enrol. Part of a student's assessment of quality is if the course gives them more of a chance of a fruitful IT career than hours of tinkering and a couple of IT contracts won on the strength of their web site.

Lastly, the strict discipline of separating (and yet aligning) responsibilities that is required to successfully implement information system is actually something that the business world could learn from. I call this discipline 'architecting' but even within IT circles references to 'architecture' tend to be taken to be technically focused. And this is even more reason to allow IT to have it's own faculty. We have no much to learn.

posted by Matthew at [5:28 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, June 13, 2005

### The Management Benefits of Telecommuting

â We're empowering them to be as close to being their own boss as someone can be and still get their paycheque. So when that person begins self-supervising the manager now is relieved from a lot of the hour-by-hour, day-by-day direction. I mean theyâ re still in touch with these people by phone and email and occasionally in person but they really see a dramatic change in just the simple issue of how they spend their time during the week. Their spending less time fighting fires, less time running into people in the hallway, and more time doing the kinds of advanced planning and thinking that presumably draw on the skills that got them into that manager's job.

The other thing that I often hear from managers â and this is kind of a revelation to them â even the most anti-telecommuting managers end up coming back saying that managing people from a distance has made them better managers of the people who are in the office. In the sense that all the management 101 skills that we've said for years managers should be doing. That is, setting standards, giving feedback, doing development plans â all that basic stuff that managers could avoid through the luxury of close contact - they now have to do when they are managing remotely. And once they begin doing it with their remote staffs they can't help but doing with their in-office staffs as well.

The double benefit is not only this notion of the gift of free time but they become more disciplined managers, and more effective managers of their office workers as well.â

Gil Gordon interviewed on â [The Cranky Middle Manager Show #2â](#)

posted by Matthew at [3:12 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, June 11, 2005

### Additional notes on the 'Mythical Management Team' book chapter

Another problem with the idea of a management team is that they will determine rank order priority for activities within the organisation. This is actually perfectly reasonable behaviour and not necessarily harmful to the organisation. After all, some projects or business units will necessarily require priority at some point in their lifetime.

The problem is that the management team operates in terms of allocating the best resources. They simply don't have the time or inclination to focus on any others. That is because conflict in resource allocation will tend to be over the best resources. The management team is unlikely to be able to make as accurate decisions around fitness of resources that is fitness to purpose.

So the management team, by placing projects or business units in ordinal priority will tend to move the best resources from assignment to assignment with little regard to finding the best fit for resources. One outcome of this are that the best resources tend to develop behaviours that match their transient work life (including ignoring important feedback loops). There is a second more damaging outcome.

The second result of an organisation which focuses on allocation of the best resources which is the natural result of a cohesive management team is that resource allocation will tend to be at the expense of other projects or business units.

You might say that this is always the case. I start this book with the observation that doing one thing is necessarily not doing another. This is the opportunity cost lesson from economics. However, economics also teaches us about comparative advantage.

So resources should be put to use in the work that they are comparatively more effective than other resources. Applying the best to each situation is like assuming that the man on the island (in the above description of comparative advantage) doesn't have an incentive to work with the second man. In reality the organisation will perform better if the concept of the best resources is replaced with the concept of the best fit .

As an aside, the focus on the best resources is actually the result of personal risk management behaviours which are developed by the management team. By focusing on the best resources there is a change that the most appropriate work allocation wont occur. It is also likely (as I'm trying to prove) that the organisation will suffer. However, the risk that an individual manager might make an allocation which is seriously flawed is actually much lower. After all, the best resources should be able to perform better than average in most situations within a particular industry.

The problem is a management team cannot make these types of decisions day-to-day. But if they are forced to work as a team what else should they do. In fact, if you are trying to be a team player and you are in a management team you need to be willing to share your resources. Even if you know the that the best fit is for a resource to stay with you it doesn't matter. You must be seen to give up your best resources for the higher priority problem. This is another case where management fads such as teamwork work for everybody except groups of managers.

Priorities change. This is true because of legitimate changes in the competitive environment. But I have a feeling that there is another force at work. Priorities change because as inappropriate resource allocation continue other projects / business units are put at risk...

posted by Matthew at [9:44 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, June 04, 2005

### It all comes together with leadership and ethics

In an unmanaged environment the difference between leadership and dissent is a matter of position. In an unmanaged organisation there is no mechanism to tell the difference between a good manager and a successful manager. Without good management there is no ethical way to distinguish between competent and incompetent employees.

posted by Matthew at [4:40 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Sunday, May 29, 2005

### Create or be created!

Even before reading *The Fountainhead* I half understood the importance of trying to create rather than just consume. The book, and Ayn Rand's philosophies in general however, turn this into almost a religion or a least a moral obligation. Her relentless pontificating, coupled with some inconsistencies in her life and her complete failure to include any happily married couples with children in her fiction, ultimately stopped me from believing that her philosophy was exactly the easy answer that everybody needed to know.

This is old news. It was always difficult for me to not have all the answers to everything. I really do wish I knew it all. I've come to instead be content with a level of uniqueness in what I do know. I don't know many of the things everybody should know. I don't know last week's football results, and I don't remember the details of history (though I do recall the dynamics). I also think that everybody should know some of the things that I know - but I'm learning to accept that they don't have to. Even when I'm right.

But today I remembered how important it is to create. This is a lesson from *The Fountainhead* (and life in general) that should not be ignored. To illustrate this, think of your favourite television programme, movie, play, book, billboard advertisement, brand, or song. Think of the joy it gives you and how much you receive from making a connection with it.

Now consider all the joy you receive from consuming those items and imagine the even greater joy you would receive if you knew you had created them yourself. Imagine being able to reflect on a thousand people who were uplifted by your work when they took a chance to rest and watch your movie, read your book, or work in the organisation you created.

Human beings are actually born to create. In fact, I don't believe they can help themselves - they must create. And this is where a very interesting problem arises. If you don't create you will become bored with your life. This has happened to me so I know it to be true. If you don't create then your life itself will become your canvas.

Many people will tell you that using your life as a canvas is the pinnacle of existence. They will tell you that your life should be a drama; and that this drama is more important than any desire you might have for simple joy and happiness. But using your life as a canvas is the final sacrifice of a human being desperate to create.

Using your life a canvas is the last resort when you have dried up your well of creativity and have nothing left within yourself to inspire you. This is what happens when you are empty and need a drama to kick-start your creative energies again.

In reality, it may be the best way to kick-start your creative energies. Which is why it is so popular and why it is proclaimed as a general purpose cure-all for all of life's troubles. But it's not the only way and it can also be an addictively simply solution. Much like Ayn Rand's childless philosophy.

With your life as your creative canvas there will be all of the exhilaration of a great novel. But there will also be all of the tragedy and all of the loss. In fact the simple quite pleasures of life and love may be lost to this adventure. With this path you will never love until it is too late. Though people will envy your adventure you will only be envied by those who create nothing. Those who have chosen to create on other canvases will not even know of your existence.

(I have a favourite poem. It's by Matthew Arnold and it's called 'The Second Best'. I think it relates to this post. But I can't find it on the Internet so it almost doesn't exist.)

posted by Matthew at [7:20 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, May 02, 2005

### Blogging on the margin

I find it interesting to note the types of blog posts that I feel like writing as I get more and more and more interested in work. There have been times when I have had very little to do at work (that I was interested in) and blogging (or prior to my blog, simply the type of writing which now ends up as a blog entry) seemed very important. Blogging seemed like something I should be making time for. Something I should be putting aside time for regardless of any other goals I might have.

Now I've found something more interesting to do (eg. fix up a project at work and learn how to effectively fix up future projects) I'm blogging on the margin. Blogging actually interferes with the other things I want to get done so I need to make a choice. While I used to write (or a least draft) a blog entry when what I really wanted to do was talk to somebody, I don't have time for that now.

It makes me think that the best blog writing probably comes from having something to say. More importantly, the best blogging is actually a commentary on a life outside blogging.

posted by Matthew at [4:07 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, April 11, 2005

### Introducing Requirements Management

Tonight I'm thinking about 'requirements management' for work. I have to introduce a requirements management discipline to an existing project. I get the impression that requirements management is being seen a primarily about change control; or rather reducing scope creep. But I know that requirements management is so much more than that.

Requirements management is about coordinating the transition of high-level requirements into detailed requirements. It's about managing the inherent uncertainty of requirements specification and coordinating the transition from uncertainty to specifications (or in low risk or repeatable cases - directly to code).

I'm trying to working out the main theme I need to introduce the discipline into the organization.

### **What has requirements?**

- A stakeholder (need)
- The project (scope)
- A component of the solution (detailed requirements)
- A physical application (such as a package; requires platforms and infrastructure)
- A platform (such as .NET; requires infrastructure)

You see, it's not just the project which has requirements. End-to-end (and layer-through-layer) requirements management includes the allocation of specific requirements to specific components of the solution architecture. This hooks the requirements management process into the project's design management, specification management (including modeling), and architecture management processes.

### **What types of requirements are there?**

- Detailed requirements
- High-level requirements
- Unmanaged requirements
- Managed requirements
- In scope requirements
- Out of scope requirements
- Positive requirements
- Negative requirements
- etc

### **Some requirements management tenets (these do or should always remain true)**

- All requirements generated outside the project are 'unmanaged' until they are assessed
- Without requirements management no separate assessment and requirements analysis can occur
- Requirements cannot be assess without a requirements management process; in such cases all requirements must be simply assessed
- Detailed requirements are the result of requirement analysis and must be managed
- Detailed requirements must apply to a specific architecture component (see MWT Book on 'Detail without Context')
- Specifications are not requirements
- Specifications are output from design processes not requirements analysis processes (if the design process was unmanaged then the specification is of poor quality)

Specification of the external behaviour of the system (such as 'functional specifications') is not requirements management. These specifications tend to be an incomplete record of an unmanaged design process.

### **What does it mean for something to be managed?**

- You need to know how far through it you are
- You know to know where you have made compromises

- You need to know what you don't know (map uncertainty)
- You need to be able to quickly size changes in inputs

posted by Matthew at [9:30 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, April 06, 2005

### What's important... to you?

Bill Jensen forwarded me some extracts from his new book 'What is your life's work?'. You can read them too - they are available [here](#).

The book contains many letters Bill has gathered over the years. The letters are the output of a meme where you write a letter to your loved ones which expresses with 'absolute conviction and clarity' what is important to you - 'your life's work'. But these aren't just letters about finding some ideal job or having a positive attitude at work. It's possible to fake the trappings of the dedicated employee. These letters aren't about being successful at work. These letters are about finding out what is important to you and doing that.

Another important theme that comes up in the extracts is the importance of doing less at work. The *obligation* to do less at work, in fact. There are two sides to this obligation which are really the same thing. Bill generally appears to come from the position that you should be doing less of what doesn't matter. He also touches on the position which I read into [Slacker Manager's](#) philosophy which is that you should be doing less as a mechanism for improving your productivity. This is the position which I tend to take.

Reducing the amount of effort it takes to achieve the same result is the very definition of productivity. Bill appears to have always been an advocate of this type of philosophy and gives compelling advice on how to it create slack (in the sense of free time) in your work day through improved *simplicity*. In that space between your increased personal responsibility and when take on additional responsibilities what exactly should you be doing? With his new book Bill provides some interesting answers to that question.

posted by Matthew at [9:29 AM](#) | [6 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, April 02, 2005

### How things can be related

Erik Benson has created a list of [how things can be related](#). This must already exist somewhere but it's still worth thinking about. To his list I would also add 'contains' (I would also rename some of his items). These are exactly the types of stereotypes which would be included in the visualisation tool pleaded for [here](#).

posted by Matthew at [8:27 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

**Tuesday, March 29, 2005**

## Short men



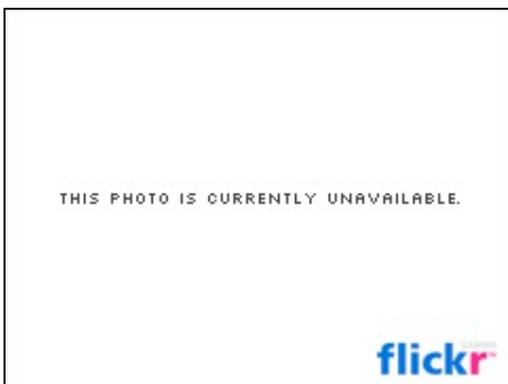
This is funny. It's a capture from a political video downloaded from [http://www.libertarian-tv.com/an\\_american\\_revolution\\_ref.mov](http://www.libertarian-tv.com/an_american_revolution_ref.mov). It clearly shows the candidate telling a photographer to tilt the camera so he doesn't look too short.

Now I realise that neither of these guys is particularly short. But it amuses me greatly that this appears as part of an inspirational montage at the end of the video. Most candidates would surely prefer to show a bit of extra baby kissing than this tilt-the-camera moment.

By the way, in addition to the great comedy this guy has lots of good stuff to say. Worth watching.

posted by Matthew at [8:07 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Blythe



[Blythe](#)

Originally uploaded by [bonny1212](#).

This is a very creepy picture of a doll. Almost as creepy as the dolls in the 'Dolls that are actually ex-babysitters' episode of the new Twilight Zone series they show at strange hours of the night here.

What this really is is a test of the Flickr to Blogger feature. Works like a treat.

posted by Matthew at [2:42 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, March 01, 2005

### Slacker manager talks about the license to manage

Referring to 'Slacker Manager's discussion of a HBR article on the possibility of making management a licensed profession. I'd argue for other advances in corporate governance before I argued for a 'license to manage'.

Other real professions such as accountants, lawyers, and doctors successfully use systems like licensing because they generally operate small firms or practices. Managers proper, and in particular those at the executive level, face greater resource coordination and allocation challenges than those professionals running a practice.

Executives take responsibility for large pools of resources which they often don't directly control. This is a challenge - and I would suggest that the issue of the best way to do this hasn't yet been solved. In fact, I would argue that the way we look at management is all wrong. I prefer to think of management as a 'technology' and not a 'profession' at all.

As discussed in the original HBR article, the idea of a management license relies on a 'Common body of knowledge resting on well-developed, widely accepted theoretical base'. I've long argued that the management 'profession' doesn't yet have this body of knowledge. For one, I've argued that the time for firms to be seen as an isolated command economy within the the greater market economy is well and truly over. That organisations continue to operate as command economies internally, when all around us the failures of such a system at the level of the nation has been exposed, is a blunder of cosmic proportions.

What's more, the specific failings of command economies are also interesting. Hayek's 'Road to Serfdom' illustrates well that in such a system 'the worst rise to the top'. Now I have nothing against successful people. In fact, I have a great respect for those that reach success through creating value and serving customer desires - that is, through perfectly legitimate means. But the driver for managerial licenses appears to be the rise of the worst. Where this has been the case it is more a reflection of failures in corporate governance than poor individual management. What were these people on top? is a more important question than Why did they behave how they did once they got there? Though both are interesting.

Part of this is the confusion between the success of an individual manager with their effectiveness. In the absence of good corporate governance an effective manager is equated with a successful manager.

One of the implied benefits of a management license is the ability for the license to improve the actions and behaviors of individual managers. This benefit logically can't be realised if the position of power implied by the very concept of management means that behaviors aren't effected.

posted by Matthew at [7:25 AM](#) | [2 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, February 23, 2005

### Benchmarking 'Mankind When Unmanaged'

David Maister presents the following figures in his talks (available [here](#)). They are a guess at categorising types of people as they are currently behaving within a professional service firm:

- Dynamos 23%
- Cruisers 60%
- Losers 17%

He presents his own definitions but the only one that isn't particularly intuitive is his definition of 'Loser' where he recognises that we can all be losers at some type in our lives.

I would suspect that many people would suggest that this is a good guess of the percentages in each category for their organisation.

The really interesting thing is that David is, during this talk, is trying to make a 'case for management'. He says 'those numbers are probably about right for mankind when unmanaged'. So if these figures seem about right for your organisation then you are performing like an unmanaged organisation! Your management function (nothing personal here - just the system itself) is not meeting the case for management presented by David.

Using the analogy of giving up his own smoking and over-eating habits David says 'If you leave me to find the energy solely on my own the odds that I will do it purely because it's logical and purely through self-discipline are in fact quite low'.

What an interesting question. How does your management system compare against the benchmark of 'mankind when unmanaged'?

posted by Matthew at [7:24 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#)

## Monday, February 21, 2005

### Structure and risk

Examine a standard project management policy around risk management and you are likely to find reference to a risk management process which looks a lot like this:

1. Invite stakeholders to a risk management kick-off meeting
2. Brainstorm risks and record in a risk register
3. Categorise the risks using attributes such as Likelihood, Impact, and Owner
4. Perform simple analysis which (usually) plots impact and likelihood to get a risk exposure
5. Aggregate all of the risks into a single 'bubble chart' which gives a the projects risk profile

Now there is nothing inherently wrong with any of those activities (with the possible exception that the last 2 steps are more about analysis than management). Project management needs to be both generic and actionable regardless of the

context. The above activities are certainly that. Their value, like most of the project management process, lies in the fact that they allow the project manager to act - even when faced with uncertainty. This is the most powerful part of the project management discipline which consistently delivers value. Many of the other benefits of project management derive value more from other skills of the individual project manager rather than the project management process itself. However, even the value of enabling action is limited. This is action at the personal level and does not necessarily equate to effectiveness at the organisational (read 'project' in this context) level.

Back to our generic risk management process, the problem with this approach is the lack of a reference architecture. The entire process relies on risks being identified by somebody. This brainstorming part of the process, which the rest of the process is based on, is actually completely subjective. Risks exist as inherent attributes of the endeavor which is the project. The risk management process must be able to find these risks - not simply focus on the activities and analysis which occurs after they are identified.

Structure, both organisational and the methodological structure, is actually the first step towards effective risk management. A collaboration architecture, or rather the generative process which ensures the true 'delineated shared understanding' which defines an architecture, ensures that risks embedded in all components are examined. More importantly, the collaboration architecture acts as a reference architecture to show where stakeholders haven't been identified or analysis hasn't been performed. What this amounts to is a better understanding of the areas of uncertainty - an important component of an effective risk management process.

You might suggest that other parts of the project management process provide the structural components which support the risk management process. For example, before you hold your risk management kick-off meeting you have 'defined scope' and 'documented roles and responsibilities'. The only problem with this is that, in the absence of a reference architecture, the project management discipline by itself doesn't help you identify the **right** scope, or the **right** roles and responsibilities. The correctness of the components becomes a quality issue - not process quality in this case, but product quality. The product being the 'scope' or the 'roles and responsibilities'. But unfortunately, within current management thinking, once an activity becomes a *management activity* it quickly becomes immune to the organisational checks and balances which naturally improve the quality of that activity (see 'Management with an uncontested value proposition' in the MWT Book).

Of course, it's also not all bad news that risk identification in the original process is subjective. You, if you wish, can look at risk management as providing a complete risk profile of the project. Alternatively, you can see the risk management process focusing on actionable risks. If nobody is identifying the hidden risks then they probably don't have an effective strategy for dealing with them (I say dealing with them and not 'mitigating' as this is only one approach to dealing with risk. Others might include 'ignore' which is definitely not mitigation). If you don't have an effective way of dealing with the risk then why manage it?

The problem only comes when you aggregate the data. If you presume that this is a complete picture of the risks you are wrong - unless you present with a reference architecture. Aggregation of incomplete data must be performed carefully. Without a reference architecture the areas of uncertainty (unknown data) will be lost in the aggregation. Where aggregation is striving to produce a complete 'big picture' of the data it often closes up the areas of uncertainty in the name of maintaining a cohesive structure in the presentation. To avoid this the presentation must be cohesively structured before the data is overlaid onto it. This often doesn't mean *pre-structuring* the representation - rather evaluating the structural goodness separate to the data.

All methodologies embody some world-view of where the risks exist. A customised, comprehensive, and task-specific methodology - and by this I don't mean a cumbersome and monolithic methodology - can actually reduce the need to go back to fundamentals for all risks. After all, task-specific methodologies are developed in response to known risk indicators inherent in the task. Unfortunately, by the time most methodologies are 'rolled out' all sense of the drivers behind the components of the methodology are lost. In effect, the process of pre-preparing methodologies disconnects the methodology from the risk mitigation drivers which formed it. This in turn causes another cross-discipline disconnect -

this time between the domain specialists promoting the methodology and the project management perspective.  
posted by Matthew at [7:23 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, February 18, 2005

### New Blog Engine

My web hosting provider now provides a free Blog engine (based on WordPress, I believe). I've converted over to this engine so I have comments and trackbacks. The old entries remain at:  
<http://www.managewithoutthem.com/blog/home.asp>.

Update: I've since converted everything to Blogger. As you can see.

posted by Matthew at [7:22 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, February 17, 2005

### No rugby jokes, please

I was lucky enough to attend a presentation on Scrum by [Joseph Pelrine](#) in Sydney last night. More importantly, I was lucky enough to have dinner and beers with Joseph and some other people from [OOSIG](#) afterwards. A big thanks to [Alex](#) for organising this!

I found some interesting similarities between Joseph's presentation of Scrum and my ManageWithoutThem philosophy. This being my only real experience with Scrum I don't have any idea if I was connecting with the Scrum process itself or something more that Joseph brought to the presentation. He certainly did bring much more so I suspect the latter.

Specific comparisons with the MWT model include

- Joseph introduced Scrum with a brief discussion about the differences between Empirical processes and Directive processes. Of course, every time I try to explain MWT I start with observation that economics recognises that there are two different types of economies, planned economies and market economies. If you understand the differences in both cases I believe you'll agree they are different in the same ways.
- Joseph used but never really defined this concept of 'simple design'. I presume this is because I was already supposed to know what this was about from eXtreme Programming. I suspect it is similar to the MWT concept of [Organisational Usability](#). I don't really like the word 'simple' because it implies that simplicity is something you decide and then do â rather than the result of a process (understood or otherwise) that you must constantly evaluate the output of to determine if it is simple. To many times I have seen too many IT managers hide behind 'I just want a simple solution' when what they are really saying is 'I have nothing to contribute'. I like the organisational usability analogy better because it begins to give a criteria for simplicity.
- A general discussion Uncertainty and Agreement and there relationship to complexity. I'd like to hear more about Joseph's views of slide xx of his presentation. When I saw the slide I immediately thought that each activity would have a real position on the graph and a position dependent on how accurately the real position was perceived. If activities were managed as though there was less uncertainty and/or more agreement than there actual was then this would push that activities position on the graph in the direction of chaos. Joseph went many

steps further and described 'a whole factual' of positions. It appears he had much more to teach about the dynamics within the 'complex' part of the graph than the big empty yellow mass implied. Excellent! Give me more!

- Joseph defended specialisation. I've often defended specialisation (I have a chapter heading, if nothing else, called 'In Defence of Specialisation') and consider it a sorry state for the science of management if it has to resort to 'I wish everybody was a generalist' when the whole point of management is the coordination of different specialists!
- I need the slides to continue this comparison. I'll post an updated entry when somebody posts the slides.

I felt three connected responses to Joseph's presentation. Firstly, when I recognised some of the ideas he was presenting as similar to my own I was a little disappointed that I wasn't quite as original as I thought. I sometimes feel like the John Nash depicted in *A Beautiful Mind* — driving himself mad in the search for a truly original idea (I also like a quote that my memory attributes to [David Weinberger](#) when he describes himself as 'an idiot savant without the savant part'). As I get back into writing the MWT book I really don't want to be held up by this kind of thinking.

Secondly, I felt vindicated. It was actually nice to know that I was right about a number of things. I've been struggling lately to continue to live under the delusion that there is value in the hideous and tedious processes that large IT consulting companies use to develop software. I actually already knew that these processes were not the optimal way to create software. However, I was willing to allow the process to keep occurring all around me. What's more, I was allowing it to exist. Often I would find myself preparing the immense plans, misguided and ambiguous functional specifications, wasting developer's time even, to produce a set of documents that 'fit the process'. All the time knowing that this wasn't how the software was going to be built.

I was, at least, honest enough to realise that a whole underground process was going to need to be developed for each project I was on. The process that would actually get the software developed. Often, some of my highly paid colleagues wouldn't admit to this. They thought the functional specifications were actually getting the software written. They thought that if only the plans were perfect next time then the software would be better. By denying that the process was broken they were effectively allowing huge amounts of project effort to go unmanaged. They were never going to take control of the system in any confident and effective way because they were ignoring what was actually occurring in the system.

Thirdly, and lastly, I realised that there was a kind of zen-truth to all of these ideas. When Joseph started talking about the 5-6 things you can do to try and change a complex systems — something that intrigued me but went a little over my head at the time (he could probably see this in my eyes but was polite enough not to notice) — I was instantly reminded of Christopher Alexander's 15 properties, generative sequences, and structure preserving transformations.

This last realisation brought it all together for me. When you are heading towards a truth perhaps you shouldn't expect it to turn out to be a truly original idea. The truth should ultimately be familiar to us and connected to everything we do. This is partially the reason that certain people can come to the same universal conclusions through the mastery of different things. Joseph doesn't think of himself as a Smalltalk developer any more. He says he is exploring organisational complexity — or complexity in general. The fact that people can still 'mistake' him for a guru-status Smalltalk developer is a testament to the intellectual place he finds himself and the universal truths he has uncovered and is learning to incorporate into his behaviours and life.

Of course, I only spoke to Joseph for a couple of hours so I'm not even really talking about him. But isn't that the whole point...?

posted by Matthew at [7:21 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

**Wednesday, February 16, 2005**

## Believing their own PowerPoint

Unfortunately, large bloated IT consulting companies have no interest in developing software cost-effectively. Now it's important to understand that I'm not proposing that there is some sort of conspiracy to make software development projects cost more than they have to. It doesn't have to be that IT consulting companies are purposefully developing methodologies that make software development take longer. It is simply, in the absence of transparency and competition, the companies that cost the most are the ones that will be the most successful. Basically, they'll make the most money.

Again, I'm all for companies making more money. I don't actually have the chip on my shoulder about so-called corporate greed that so many people appear to have. All I'm saying is that in the absence of competition (or more importantly a diversity) and transparency there is no incentive for big bloated IT consulting companies to convert to more efficient methodologies for software development.

Now this is a worrisome state for the IT industry to be in. But it's even more worrisome when you consider that for a young generation of talented (or rather intelligent) recruits into IT consulting these methodologies are the only way of developing software they have ever know! Born and bred in an environment which sells the approach through a bastardised definition of risk management and fear mongering about software failures, these talented graduates learn to justify and sell the approach until they actually start to believe their own PowerPoint presentations. All the while, by ignoring the alternatives, they are paying only lip service to risk management and quality by turning these processes into a disconnected series of reviews and lists.

Real software quality, at reduced costs, is available to organisations through improved software processes. Monolithic software processes which require feats of great prediction and hundred's of hours of b-grade consulting to implement are not the answer. These process success only in ensuring value is delivered as late in the process as possible.

posted by Matthew at [7:20 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, February 15, 2005

### MWT Book Extract - Broken Collaboration Contracts

Part of one section of the MWT book is available below as a pdf:

[MWT Book - Extract - Broken Collaboration Contracts](#)

I will be taking a month off very soon where I will be able to progress the book further. I have, unfortunately, been too busy to write over the past 12 months.

posted by Matthew at [7:19 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, February 14, 2005

## The Organising Power of Science Fiction

I'm currently reading Cory Doctorow's Eastern Standard Tribe and it has inspired me. He has me thinking of the management potential of good science fiction writing and the vision it presents.

A few months ago when I was reading the doctor's first novel, Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom, I thought I'd discovered him. However, he appears to be gathering quite a following in science fiction circles and publications. This is much like when I thought I'd discovered on-line journal writer, author, and sometimes science fiction fan Jason Pettus a few years ago at a time when the AvantGo version of his on-line journal had over 10,000 subscribers!

I used to read science fiction as a teenager. I bought more of it than I actually read, mainly because I'd often buy a whole series only to be disappointed by the first few pages of the first book. I recall many types of science fiction; but much of it offered no more than the combination of some other genre with new technology and a slightly exotic location. Western with laser guns, soap opera on another planet or in a space-station, love story with tragic death born of alien invasion. That sort of thing.

Cory Doctorow doesn't write that sort of science fiction. Cory writes pure vision. He reminds me of Stanislaw Lem but I don't really recall the details of Lem (it's been 15 years!) so I fear I might just be comparing them based on a generic 'goodness' rather than any specific qualities. Lem is worth checking out regardless.

Back to Cory Doctorow's Eastern Standard Tribe. My Palm e-book reader tells me that I'm only 17% into the book and already I'm intrigued by the novel's vision of the future. In particular, in the novel's incorporation current and evolving technologies into new social structures. It also has a focus on technology offering competitive advantage at a individual level.

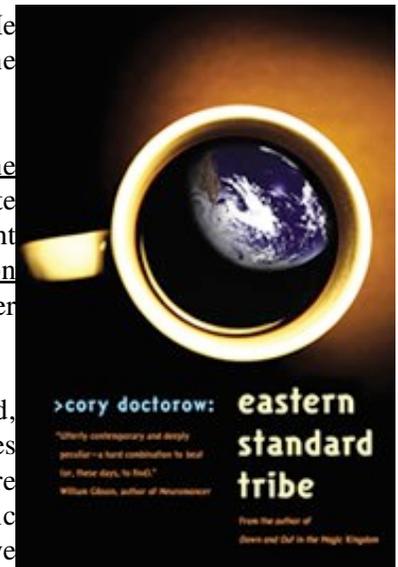
You can feel (though no explicit mention has been made of them yet) the micro-payments swishing about as intelligent agents query information, verify documents, and raise alerts - all from wearable personal computers. You can also see evidence of technological 'arms races' as individuals and organisations each use increasingly technical solutions to counter the other's technologies.

All this amounts to a powerful vision. Management has been fond of vision for years now - but corporations are sadly lacking in technical and organisational (and organising) visions.

Why not outsource visioning? Perhaps Doctorow (who is already actively looking for alternative ways to grow rich from his writing), and other authors of his caliber, can hire themselves out to write novels which explore the potential of a corporation's products and services. Or even, after spending a little time hidden within the corporation's corridors  $\hat{\Delta}^{\hat{\Delta}}_{\hat{\Delta}}^{\hat{\Delta}}$  acting as an employee, perhaps  $\hat{\Delta}^{\hat{\Delta}}_{\hat{\Delta}}^{\hat{\Delta}}$  write a vision of how the corporation might operating internally or with its partners.

I'm not talking about propaganda - not even marketing - but a vision. Perhaps the vision completely destroys the corporation's value proposition. Or perhaps two alternative visions are offered. There is no implication that the novel would be something you would want to show the shareholders. Should be a vision in the sense that it is a horizontal organising mechanism - a vision in the practical sense of an enabler of collaboration and organisation.

Interestingly, between the time I downloaded EST and the time I started reading it and typing this blog post, it appears that Vodafone has made reference to the novel in one of its market-facing publications. Vodafone obviously already



see some of the commercial potential of Cory's vision.

Doctorow is already exploring the question of 'Eastern Standard Tribe coming true?' on his web site. He is also well aware of the need to experiment with alternative models for embracing and exploiting his creative talent - offering multiple distribution options for his work, including free Creative Commons licensed download being part of this. What he also needs to explore, and what people will pay big dollars for, is the potential for his writing to actually create, rather than just predict, the future.

Update (01/07/2005): I've been feeling kinda silly giving Cory advice (even if not directly). His name keeps coming up all over the place. He's certainly been doing a hell of a lot more than I suggested - and he's been doing it for years!

posted by Matthew at [7:18 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, February 09, 2005

### Mindmaps



posted by Matthew at [7:17 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Sunday, February 06, 2005

### Alternate Definition of Management #532

Management is the art of deciding which decisions don't require consensus.

posted by Matthew at [7:16 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, February 01, 2005

### Happy Birthday Ayn Rand

[Article](#) on Mises.org.

posted by Matthew at [7:15 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

### Falicious planning

I believe there is an old Dilbert comic that shows Dilbert's pointy-haired boss asking the development team to 'design everything you can think of so I can choose which one I want'.

This is the problem when management is seen as simply decision making (or worse, as deal making) rather than allocating scarce resources and assuming responsibility.

Of course, everybody knows this. Everybody can say they are pragmatic. However, there are still many fallacious arguments made disguised as pragmatic management.

While I see management activities and expertise as something that is inherently task-specific I still tackle every management challenge as a general management challenge. Part of this is recognising when planning is being faked.

Take an example that I often hear from test managers. Test managers try and tell me that they will prioritise which test cases they are going to produce and/or execute by listing all of the possible test conditions that could be tested and then assigning a priority to each one. On other occasions the test manager doesn't even intend to take responsibility for the prioritisation of the test conditions. In these cases business stakeholders are asked (after they have already prioritised features and other requirements) to do the prioritisation for the test manager.

Now the problem with the extreme version of this approach is that where business stakeholders do the actual prioritisation is that it gives up responsibility for testing. Give up responsibility and you really can't say you're managing anything.

The more subtle problems come from the specifics of the testing problem domain. Testing is one of those unbounded activities that you can devote as much or as little effort as you like to. Within that there are also extremes of effectiveness with regards to that effort which essentially represents the quality of your testing.



## Thursday, November 11, 2004

You're really better off going to:

<http://www.managewithoutthem.com/blog/>

posted by Matthew at [1:44 PM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

### Anybody think in graphs?

[Welkin: A General-Purpose RDF Browser...](#) is yet another meaningless graph-based viewer.

Nobody I know thinks in graphs. My wife reminded me last night that I only really know about 4 people (and to be fair a couple of them might actually think in graphs) but I'm pretty sure \*I\* don't think in graphs.

What I really want to see is a browser with some sort of 'plug-in's for relationship type visualisations. The basic relationships I would expect to come out of the box are 'Contains', 'Is followed by', 'Below', 'Peer'.

The next feature required is to be able to lock down some visualisations and relationships. For example I might define a framework containing a number of locked down visualisations (say some boxes to put stuff in) and some locked down relationships (give everything with a 'Type' attribute of 'Platform' a 'Contains' relationship joint to the locked down Platform visualisation I have placed on the framework).

The browser could then produce something a little more meaningful. Contradictions within rules could be shown with movement (alternate between the two contradicting relationships and redraw).

In the above example I could throw data at the framework and it could sort it. Then I could overlay the graph-based representation as used by this Welkin thingie. Because items would already be constrained I'd be able to actually get some meaningful information from the damn visualisation!!!

posted by Matthew at [7:09 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, September 15, 2004

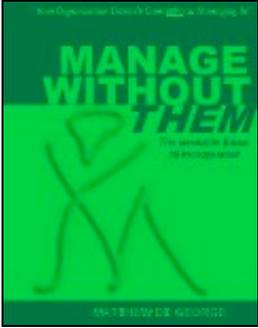
### Innovation and Methods

Industries have standards. Professions have methods. Management is all about coordinating the activities of separate individuals to meet shared goals. Simply ignoring the standards and methods those individuals are familiar with shouldn't be mistaken for management innovation.

posted by Matthew at [9:08 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, September 01, 2004

### Book Cover



The book cover has been designed. Still plenty of work left arranging all the words inside. Click [here](#) to see the cover.

posted by Matthew at [9:05 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) \_

## Sunday, August 15, 2004

### Democratic management?

Some may ask why can't a manager be like a politician? What they are asking is for political democracy to replace traditional managerialism. They want managers to be elected. Ignoring, for a moment, the fact that electing the particular person who will perform the functions of management doesn't, in itself, solve the problem of determining what the right functions are, let's examine this idea further.

Those that argue for democracy of this sort within organisations forget to consider the possibility of being in the minority. In an election for the leadership of a country it is possible for up to 50% of the population to disagree with the choice of leadership. Under some election rules an even greater percentage may in fact disagree with the ultimate winner.

What allows such a system to work is not the process of allowing the people to vote. Rather, it is the fact that the government does not have total power  $\hat{A}^{\hat{A}}_{\hat{A}}^{\hat{A}}$  regardless of who wins. It is tools such as constitutions, which limit the power of government, that allow such a democratic system to work.

What organisations lack is not a voting system; rather these other institutions which form a democratic society. Organisations, with few exceptions, have no constitution, no free-press, no opposition party, etc. When combined with the absence of any organisational price system the absence of these components do more harm than the absence of democratically elected managers.

In fact, democratically elected managers would, in the absence of these missing components, be granted a dangerous legitimacy. They would be free to perform any function  $\hat{A}^{\hat{A}}_{\hat{A}}^{\hat{A}}$  whether good or bad for the organisation  $\hat{A}^{\hat{A}}_{\hat{A}}^{\hat{A}}$  on the grounds that they were elected officials.

Sound familiar?

posted by Matthew at [9:04 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) \_

## Wednesday, August 11, 2004

### There's not conspiracy (#2); Aka 'valuing managers on the margin'

Management is not an evil thing. MWT is not anti-management. In fact, in half a MWT organisation there is more risk than in a normal organisation (or a full MWT organisation, of course). If you see MWT as risky you are only seeing half of the MWT solution.

Traditional management tasks have been designed with one purpose in mind. They have been designed to allow somebody no more competent than any other person to manage other people.

In any other situation the cost of managers would be too high. If managers were valued 'on the margin', such that any particular manager (as opposed to management skills in general) was more highly valued than an other manager, management costs for an organisation would simply be too high.

In a (full) MWT organisation managers really are valued on the margin. Management tasks aren't valued in themselves; so good and bad managers are more likely to be distinguished. Once the organisation can make this distinction managers can be paid differing salaries.

The problem with half a MWT organisation is simply the risk that the organisation cannot yet properly distinguish between good and bad managers and yet there is a wide range of management salaries.

Beware of being half a MWT organisation...

posted by Matthew at [9:03 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, July 10, 2004

### Markets within Firms

There is some discussion on markets within firms at [Marginal Revolution](#).

This isn't really the types of markets I was thinking of. This is workers trading futures contracts on product sales, product success etc. In essence creating a market to gather information already contained within the organisation.

Presumably, traditional managers would then act on that information. So the approach is still intervention-based. The actual coordination mechanism within the firm doesn't really change. I'm looking at markets within firms that actually act as the coordination mechanism.

Still interesting though... As most things at MarginalRevolution are.

posted by Matthew at [9:02 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, June 18, 2004

### Absent Praise and Abortive Clarity

I've just finished reading Richard Dawkins' [The Blind Watchmaker](#). I must have been reading this book on and off for about 5 years. Each time I've moved houses it gets packed away in a box somewhere and I don't get back to it for months. I'm notorious for taking years to read books anyway and at this time can count no less than 12 bookmarks within even the small selection of my books that currently have a place on my shelves.

My discontinuous wander through Dawkins' fascinating book has probably furthered the effect on my thinking it has had even beyond the considerable influence of its brilliance. I thoroughly enjoy Dawkins' written style. I don't know the nature of his friendship with Douglas Adams; though I could speculate upon the qualities that drew them together. But even without such speculation their friendship seems to just feel right considered only on the strength of the pleasure of reading their written works.

Enough of this absent praise! What I'd really like to acknowledge are two important contributions Dawkins' books have made on my theory of organisation. Dawkins argues in [The Blind Watchmaker](#) that the 'unconscious, automatic, blind yet essentially non-random process discovered by Darwin' is the only theory capable of 'explaining the existence of organized complexity'. However, even when I first started reading the book all those years ago it was organisational complexity I was reading it as an explanation of.

This is because I'd already read [The Selfish Gene](#)... Hold on; I've just added another book to my shelves such that there are now 13 books with bookmarks on my shelves. So I should say that I was reading [The Blind Watchmaker](#) with organisational complexity in mind because I had already read half of [The Selfish Gene](#).

Reading [The Selfish Gene](#) I became fascinated with the idea of evolutionary stable states. The concept that there were states that a complex evolving system could take which were more stable than others. A simple concept I must admit; but one which to my mind automatically implied the possibility of states which would promote run away change in a particular direction (a concept actually explored in [The Blind Watchmaker](#) under 'Explosions and Spirals').

Actually, it's a little difficult to explain how this relates to my theory of organisations. I hope one day to get my thoughts more in order. It's something to do with organizations rewarding poor quality management... The other contribution is something to do with the environment in which publicly owned firms exist and the effect this has on how they are managed. Oh I'm too sleepy.

posted by Matthew at [7:09 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, June 09, 2004

### Wedding PhotosWedding Photos

Wedding photos are available for friends and family:  
<http://www.managewithoutthem.com/wedding/>

posted by Matthew at [7:08 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## The day I woke up and didn't hate marketing

It's interesting. As a youngster I was like the characters in Dilbert. Always complaining that the marketing department was selling things that the engineers didn't know how to build.

As I get older that concerns me less and less. Some of my greatest frustrations come from the lack of a mature, diverse set of service offerings to deliver.

In a sense, it doesn't matter if there is nothing behind the service offerings to back them up. It doesn't matter if the organisation doesn't know how half of them are going to be delivered.

I know how to deliver. I know how to implement. I know how to manage. I have enough experience in the IT industry now to be genuinely confident. I'll link the service offerings to the delivery capabilities I have access to and make all those grandiose service offerings a reality. That's my job.

When I see a mature, well-organised set of service offerings like those presented by [Unisys](#) (just a random example) I see it as a thing of beauty. I don't cynically wish it were actually true that they had a fully-developed delivery architecture behind them. I just start wondering how I could deliver them.

posted by Matthew at [7:07 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Well, of course it is!

ZDNet today reported on a study that found that [IT moral was at an all-time low](#). It suggests the reasons are primarily 'continuing lack of job growth' but that doesn't sound like a reason to me. It sounds more like a symptom of an industry gone mad.

Apparently the report says that 'fewer employees, fewer dollars for projects, and the perception that there is not need to focus on retention' will also not help productively in the industry. I can't agree more with the first two – particularly in software development where they are basically the same thing – because being able to use fewer employees and allocate fewer dollars to projects is a sign of increased productivity not a cause.

I don't think the IT industry is engaging in particularly challenging projects. Sure the Internet makes the results of some projects more visible to customers and commentators; and the consulting industry does keep coming up with new names for the same stuff – but the industry is still engineering software, integrating systems, and building infrastructure.

So if the projects aren't any more challenging why should they still be allocated the same number of dollars? And the reason is that the IT industry isn't becoming more productive – it's becoming less productive.

Now some notes on why;

\* there are too many non-IT people in the industry; people without the aptitude for the industry who are simply looking for the 20 percent higher wages the report also speaks of

\* the IT industry suffers from the strange perception that having certain skills means that you are incapable of having

other skills; for example if you are a 'techie' you can't manage

\* combining those two points, it's the non-IT people who are managing the industry. This is justified specifically because they DON'T have knowledge of IT; not based on any particular skills that they DO have

\* therefore management of the IT industry is performed out of context. so it's dominated by the types of management Mintzberg refers to in 'Managers Not MBAs' (which is, incidentally the type of management that MWT does without)

posted by Matthew at [7:06 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, June 03, 2004

### Back Links

I'm proud that a reference to ManageWithoutThem has made it into the world of business education:

Johnson C. Smith University  
Business Administration - Management (Subject Guide)  
<http://archives.jcsu.edu/library/busmanag.htm>

posted by Matthew at [7:05 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

### I'm not mad

Well, other people agree with me:

[Against Management: Organization in the Age of Managerialism](#)  
by Martin Parker

Nice review [here](#).

posted by Matthew at [7:04 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, June 02, 2004

### Finally, The Big Picture

Check out new article in the Articles section called 'Finally, The Big Picture'.

posted by Matthew at [7:03 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, May 05, 2004

### From the Mouths of Babes

I was shocked recently when my wife, Heidi (the 'babe' in this example :-), suggested that I was 'anti-business'. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Anti-management I would understand. Often people don't quite appreciate that I'm making a distinction between good and bad management. I'm only against bad management or management for management's sake. I'm against command-based coordination and for market-based coordination.

Heidi's anti-business remark was a flippant comment she actually knows me better than that. But what it does show is that to some people even exceptionally clever and attractive ones management and business are the same thing.

Management and business are bundled together into the same thing in the minds of the masses because, to many employees, they represent the unknown. Also, management tends to justify just about any decision on the basis that it's 'good business'. This is, of course, regardless of the quality of the decision, its real motivation, and its effect on the business.

The reality is that managerialism and business are almost opposites. Management as a profession refers specifically to the practice of using people **who are not the business owners** to run a business. This might get muddled when people start talking about ownership of options and shares for senior executives. But these are incentive mechanisms and don't alter the basic nature of managerialism.

To be anti-business I would have to be anti-entrepreneurship and anti-capitalism. If that was the case I wouldn't keep referring my readers to Mises.org and Ayn Rand novels.

Business is about trading, contracts, exposing your services to a market, and trusting that market to determine the value of your goods and services. **In business, if an activity has no value you will continue doing it at your peril.**

Compare that to the command-based co-ordination reflected in managerialism. Task allocation is performed without a real trade, management activities are not exposed to the market, and any activity that can be designated a management activity no longer needs to justify its existence by showing that it delivers value to anybody.

In truth, after years of muddle-headed thinking and false assumptions, **management consists of quite a few activities that you would not purchase from a business if they were offering them as a service.**

So, let's not confuse business with management.

posted by Matthew at [7:02 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) \_

## Monday, May 03, 2004

## Words to live by

This is a philosophy I've developed over the years. It's too close to anarchy to be of any value as an organisational management philosophy (i.e. think of the brand damage) but I'm still glad others agree:

"There is only one basic human right, the right to do as you damn well please. And with it comes the only basic human duty, the duty to take the consequences."

- P.J. O'Rourke (can be found here)

posted by Matthew at [7:01 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, April 27, 2004

### I'm Not a Technology Person II

Further to my [I'm not a technology person](#) article I found this:

WHAT IF PEOPLE BOUGHT CARS LIKE THEY BUY COMPUTERS?

General Motors doesn't have a "help line" for people who don't know how to drive, because people don't buy cars like they buy computers -- but imagine if they did . . .

...

HELPLINE: "General Motors HelpLine, how can I help you?"

CUSTOMER: "Hi! I just bought my first car, and I chose your car because it has automatic transmission, cruise control, power steering, power brakes, and power door locks."

HELPLINE: "Thanks for buying our car. How can I help you?"

CUSTOMER: "How do I work it?"

HELPLINE: "Do you know how to drive?"

CUSTOMER: "Do I know how to what?"

HELPLINE: "Do you know how to drive?"

CUSTOMER: "I'm not a technical person! I just want to go places in my car!"

- [www.sweenytod.com/funny/joke15.html](http://www.sweenytod.com/funny/joke15.html)

Of course, all this tells us is that people don't actually value IT support; not that it isn't valuable.

I agree that technology must become more usable. But in order for that to happen we must value the processes and skills that are required to produce more usable technology.

posted by Matthew at [7:00 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, April 22, 2004

### New Draft Article

A new draft article is available called 'PMs will thank me: Anti-Anti-Management I'. It starts to describe how MWT is not anti-management. It also shows that current thinging on organisations actually is.

It is available at on-line [here](#).

posted by Matthew at [6:57 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, April 21, 2004

### Nature Law and Management

One of the differences between the ManageWithoutThem management model and the type of management we are used to is that MWT is based around 'rule by law' and that nasty management you are used to is based on 'rule by man'.

The difference is actually greater than this. When Austrian economists such as Hayek speak of 'rule by law' they often qualify it with standards around what makes a good law. Without such standards 'rule by law' is essentially the same as 'rule by man' → only the laws have been codified.

Organisations almost understand the need to transition to 'rule by law'. This is evident in the emphasis in processes. However, organisations are yet to understand the next step.

The standards which make a good law (or at least one perspective on this) come from a body of theory around 'natural law'. Check out [James's Liberty File Collection](#) and particularly his introduction to [nature law](#).

posted by Matthew at [6:53 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, March 09, 2004

### Butler and IT Governance

I attended the Butler Group IT Governance Master Class in Sydney today (9 March 2004) and was disappointed. It showed a real lack of innovation in IT Governance thinking.

The problem was that even though 'Business/IT Alignment' was cynically referred to as just as important and elusive as it always was → their entire analysis served to separate rather than align.

I think it starts with an often held assumption that the entire IT functional should be run as one big service. I know how popular and well intended this thinking is (it must 'serve' the business to it must be a 'service') but it simply isn't valid. Butler based much of their analyst on this assumption.

Business Transformation is a service. If that transformation is technology-enabled that is also a service. But once the IT is embedded in to the organisation it should be managed and costed as simply another part of the organisation's capabilities.

Take ERP. If an organisation requires an enterprise-level resource planning capability that capability should be managed and costed as such.

Just because an organisation's enterprise-level resource planning capability has been implemented in an ERP system doesn't mean that it should be considered an IT cost.

(I'm not defending ERP costs here by the way. In general, I think ERPs are evil.)

What is needed is a view of organisations which is capability based. With just as much attention paid to the IT features that make up the capability as there is to the non-IT resources that make up that capability.

Once this view of the organisation is established basic management principles can be applied. Those responsible for delivering true IT services (such as database, network, and file services) will have sufficient control over how those services are delivered to enable them to meet the business's required service levels and costs (through appropriate use of leveraged services).

The Butler Master Class didn't bring us any closer to that situation at all...

That said; the best comment was from a member of the audience: "We always say that the business should understand IT more. This isn't really true. We want the business to understand IT Management more."

posted by Matthew at [4:50 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Sunday, December 28, 2003

### ManageWithoutThem Drinking Mug Available!

In association with CafePress I present the first ever piece of lame ManageWithoutThem merchandise!

Actually, I think it looks fantastic. The first item available for order at the MWTShop at CafePress is a quality drinking mug with the ManageWithoutThem logo and the words "I'm Sorry... Is my work interfering with your management?".

Stay tuned for much less cynical (but perhaps less fun) items in the near future. The mug is available at:

<http://www.cafeshops.com/mwtshop>

posted by Matthew at [4:43 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .



## Monday, December 01, 2003

### Oldie but a goodie

An oldie but a goodie. Again, from our secret correspondent 'Sparkles'...

To: MWT

From: Sparkles

A man in a hot air balloon realized he was lost. He reduced his altitude and spotted a woman below. He descended a bit more and shouted, "Excuse me, can you help me? I promised a friend I would meet him an hour ago, but I don't know where I am."

The woman below replied, "You're in a hot air balloon hovering approximately 30 feet above the ground. You're between 40 and 45 degrees north latitude and between 9 and 60 degrees west longitude."

"You must be in Information technology," said the balloonist.

"I am," replied the woman, "How did you know?"

"Well," answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is technically correct, but I've no idea what to make of your information, and the fact is I'm still lost. Frankly, you've not been much help at all. If anything, you've delayed my trip."

The woman below responded, "You must be in Management."

"I am!" replied the balloonist, "but how did you know?"

"Well", said the woman, "you don't know where you are or where you're going. You have risen to where you are, due to a large quantity of hot air. You made a promise, which you've no idea how to keep, and you expect people beneath you to solve your problems. The fact is you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but now, somehow, it's my fault."

posted by Matthew at [4:43 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, October 15, 2003

### Innovation and the Cost of Experiments

Listen to the excellent interview with author of "Experimentation Matters", Stefan Thomke.

Available from Economist.com [here](#).

(Real Audio required)

Quotes:

"I ask them if they experiment and they look at me and start nodding. If I ask them HOW they experiment... they often shake there heads... Often projects become experiements after fact... they try something out and it doesn't work and of course it was an experiment..."

"new technologies... are making it easier than ever to conduct experiments...as a result we can do that sort of experimentation at a tiny fraction of the cost... that creates this potential to do something differently...faster... at lower cost... "

His book is available at Amazon.com:

[Experimentation Matters: Unlocking the Potential of New Technologies for Innovation](#)

posted by Matthew at [6:42 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, September 01, 2003

### Discipline-based Productivity vs. Managerial Productivity - Part I

*Much has been said about productivity improvements in organisations. It can be seen in an organisation's top level reporting that productivity improvements simply aren't occurring. However, if you ask individuals you'll see that their personal productivity is improving all the time. Actually, whole disciplines are becoming more productive every day. So why not organisations?*

(Part 1 of a 3 part article)

The effort it takes to create a software application is less than it was 10 years ago. Let's take an example of a simple application to store names and address. It would take about 30 seconds to create such an application today.

To create that software application now we simply open Microsoft Excel and type the word "Name" at the top of one column and the word "Address" at the top of the other. The reason it is easier to create this software application is because technologies exist to help us with this.

Critics of the IT industry will immediately suggest that while this is a solution to the problem it isn't very useable. More importantly it requires users of the application to already have some knowledge of the product in which it is build (i.e. Microsoft Excel).

What the critics don't acknowledge is that the situation is not unique to the disciplines of information technology. As any discipline, be it engineering, craft, marketing, or even management, builds up a toolkit of generally accepted tools they at once increase their productivity and constrain the use of their products and services.

If we take an example outside the IT-based disciplines we see the more general situation. Even as the medical profession adopts a toolkit of drug-based relief to medical conditions it makes it more difficult for those seeking natural remedies to get relief the same medical conditions.

It should be noted that even if the drug-based approach is better than any other approach there will be dissatisfaction from those who have a different need or opinion than the medical profession. Equally, even if the drug-based approach isn't better than other approaches, it will be make the medical profession more productive - by at least some measures.

Again, I'll assert that individual disciplines actually are becoming more and more productive all the time. Whatever your profession, you'll find yourself confronting similar situations again and again as you progress through your career. Over time you'll develop skills and adopt behaviours which improve your ability to respond to those situations.

If you're keen, you'll look to other people in your chosen field to help you identify and adopt those skills and behaviours more quickly.

Every profession does this. Clerical staff. IT Consultants. Computer Programmers. Actors. Authors. Mechanics. Sales People. Marketing People. Managers.

So everybody is getting more and more productive. But not organisations. Why?

More in Part II.

posted by Matthew at [6:40 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monopolies, Governments, and Operating Systems

I was just reading in the [Sydney Morning Herald](#) that "JAPAN, China and South Korea plan to develop an original operating system in a bid to challenge the domination of Microsoft Windows."

This consortium is also planning to "develop their own unique application software programs, including those for word processing and spreadsheets".

Sure; the countries are expected to do this by improving an open-source operating system like Linux. But the first suspicion should be raised around the idea of improving Linux. The open-source model itself already improves Linux.

The way a government would contribute to the improvement of such an operating system would be to create incentives for organisations to channel resources to the improvement and use of such an operating system; not to "develop an original operating system".

The fact is, in terms of consumer choice, privacy of information, open data formats, etc; what is the best alternative? That a large corporate monopoly force an operating system down people's throats, or a government monopoly force an operating system down people's throats.

We want governments to use open source operating systems (file formats, etc) for reasons more important than because some of us think Microsoft is a monopoly.

Andrew; please tell me what to think (at [morenews.blogspot.com](http://morenews.blogspot.com)).

posted by Matthew at [6:38 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, August 22, 2003

## Cynicism from "Sparkles", our secret corespondent in the field

I think she's being a tad unfair. I think many managers have good intentions but are merely doing the wrong stuff. However, Sparkles is not alone with her sentiments...

To: MWT  
From: Sparkles

Thought you might like my latest insight into current senior management trends ..

"I'm thinking that when you become one of the big boys you've gotta adopt what I call the "bad apple strategy". You see you can buy an apple that looks quite good - and it isn't until you bite into it that you realise that you definitely don't want to eat it and there isn't much worth salvaging. But you can still slap a bit of wax on the apple and make it look really appetizing! In fact you can brag to everyone - look until I slapped the wax on the apple it looked pretty average - but now it looks great!! Now the trick is to get rid of the apple before it goes so bad that it looks bad from the outside as well. That way when things go bad you can claim that they were good when you were in charge!"

posted by Matthew at [6:37 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, August 09, 2003

### I love it when ancient Chinese proverbs quote me...

The first step towards wisdom is calling things by their right names.

--Chinese Proverb

(found [here](#))

posted by Matthew at [6:36 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Saturday, July 19, 2003

## Start Business Modelling Now!

Your organisation needs a business model  $\hat{A}$ ½ right now.

Actually your organisation already has one. Even if you don't have a business model defined explicitly, your organisation is still operating based on an implied business model which you don't understand.

Before roles and responsibilities, before scope, before strategy even, you should be documenting your business model right now!

Already done that? Well communicate it. Do your employees know it? Proceed to Step 2...

Step 2... Even better than documenting your business model is modelling your business model.

A working model of your organisation is not only a great communication tool but will also aid in formulating your business transformation strategies.

Does business modelling sound to 'old school' to you? You're wrong. It's important to every type of organisation.

So, if your organisation is zany and creative try modelling with Logo Serious Play:

[http://www.tayfundemiroz.com/  
New\\_Economy/Play/index.htm](http://www.tayfundemiroz.com/New_Economy/Play/index.htm)

If you're all engineers at heart perhaps you could try something like Top Modeller:

[http://www-rcf.usc.edu/  
~majchrza/topmodeler/](http://www-rcf.usc.edu/~majchrza/topmodeler/)

Pick one (or find something better); just start now!

posted by Matthew at [6:31 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, July 18, 2003

### Organisational Systems have a life-cycle?

Author [Jason Pettus](#) tells an interesting story about the inevitability of organisational systems turning feral:

[http://www.geocities.com/  
jpettus.geo/fp03/0702.htm](http://www.geocities.com/jpettus.geo/fp03/0702.htm)

Perhaps there is no conspiracy here. Perhaps organisational systems have a life-cycle? What does this mean for management and organisations?

posted by Matthew at [6:30 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, July 15, 2003

### What is a Solution Architect?

The purpose of a Solution Architecture is not just to ensure a technically superior solution. An effective Solution Architecture enables the *distributed design* of a technically superior solution.

As such, a Solution Architect is not simply a senior technical designer. An effective Solution Architect combinations the skills of a technologist, business analysis, and change agent to visualise and drive the delivery of the overall solution.

The term 'solution' implies a fit within a particular business context and challenge. The Solution Architect needs to define that business context (and the required business transformation) with the same rigor as the technical components of the solution.

Once the layered solution architecture is defined, the Solution Architect switches to change agent mode  $\tilde{\hat{A}}_i \hat{A} \frac{1}{2}$  ensuring the delivery programme contains the most effective set of projects and work streams to ensure successful delivery.

posted by Matthew at [6:28 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

### Is Cutter. Is Good.

Cutter has always had interesting things to say about IT project management and development processes.

Agile Project Management

<http://www.cutter.com/workshops/22.html>

(pair programming is still a dump idea)

Agile Requirements

<http://www.cutter.com/workshops/11.html>

posted by Matthew at [6:27 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, July 11, 2003

### KM response

I had a chance to read through your knowledge management synopsis. I think we can twist a few of the ideas on there head and perhaps extend them further:

When you say 'a lot of knowledge is being held by the senior staff' I'm wondering is this is a cause or a symptom. Are these people senior staff because of their knowledge? Have they been promoted because of there knowledge? Or is the knowledge flow in EDS such that knowledge flows upwards more than it flows down?

It appears, as you have identified, that the value system which manages our organisation values our senior staff having knowledge rather than enabling its flow.

If these senior people are subject matter experts their specialist knowledge should be rewarded. EDS needs SMEs, they are a vitally important part of our business.

A senior EDSer with a lot of knowledge is an SME. If that knowledge is about the multitude of EDS processes they are an EDS Processes SME.

EDS needs to reward our SMEs. EDS needs to retain SMEs. EDS needs to develop more SMEs.

But an SME is not a manager.

A manager will never be measured by the knowledge they have; only for the capability of their team. Measurement of managers will always be like this. It will always be 'one step removed' from the management itself.

You will never hear a real manager lament that their staff don't know enough - because a real manager knows that they are responsible for the knowledge of their staff.

The essence of effective measurement of management activities is to always measure things one step removed from the management - thing that can't be directly controlled or manipulated. Numbers can be manipulated. People can be manipulated.

In this way management measures are more like market indicators. But to have market indicators you need to have a market. Most organisations already do.... But we'll get to that later.

Doesn't this mean that SMEs and specialists should be just doing what they want? Absolutely not! Specialists have all sorts of industry standards of practice that they have to follow.

When correctly applied this professional standards of practise might be called 'best practices'. But this term almost has no meaning anymore...

But we already know that employees should follow best practices don't we? It common knowledge that best practices are the way to go - this is true by definition. The best way to do something is the best way to do it.

Principle number ?; if something is bloody obvious. The simplest most logical thing to do. Then why isn't it being done? Easy. Because organisations do name operate on logic. They are social and they are political but they are not logical.

Two principle are at work to solve this. Firstly, 'time spent doing one thing is time not spent doing another'. Best practices are driven from listening to peer. To comparing the results of competing processes, behaviours, and value systems.

If SMEs and specialists are going to learn 'best practices' (either from experimentation or from others) they need to stop doing something that they are currently do in order to spend the time developing capability....

What to stop doing? Easy. Stop listening to their managers telling them how to do there job. Stop listening to their clients when they tell them how to do their job. Seriously.

Christopher Alexander often inspires me. I've never read a single book of his or seen anything he has designed. But each quote I read is fascinating.

That the time he was trying to design a process that would allow anybody to design a building project in Mexico

(remember Chris is on a mission to save the world from a bad built environment - and he realises that he simply can't do it himself).

When he design the process for this project in Mexico he basically said 'you get all of the requirements, making sure you really do cover all of the requirements [don't wanta miss any of those requirements] and then build a solution that is isomorphic to the complete set of requirements and [da da!] you have a solution.

You know what happened. The buildings sucked! Or at least they failed to impress Chris. They really did meet all the requirements but they were different to anything else. No differentiation. Ask Micheal Porter. That means death.

When our clients demand more innovation. From our proposals and from our solutions aren't they just saying 'don't simply meet our requirements'.

But they are responsible. That's what hierarchy means.

But what are managers left to do? Nothing. No way! There is plenty to do.

Schedules (but they are personal and not above deliniation. Because the sequence in which you do something is part of the competency!)

Resource marshling (but how can you marshing resources if nobody is allowed to leave you? If you get given 'responsibility' for them. But you can never be given responsibility for anything.....)

They can be a type of architect too. A delivery architect. But they are measured by the particular architect soft and hard skills. No the vague 'manager' skills that have got us into this mess.

How do we start to make these markets?

\* blogs:- not everybody will want one but; what does it mean when a manager never posts anything? if a subject mater expert never posts anything? if a manager posts a lot but nobody reads it? if somebody only collects links to everybody elses information (does EDS value this? should they?)?

\* leave gaps for them

posted by Matthew at [6:35 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, July 04, 2003

### MWT/IT - Programme Definition Worksheet - Review 1

MangeWithoutThem is largely a general management model. But it advocates the creation of 'collaboration architectures' which are task-specific. Because I'm in the IT consulting business, and because I claim that the management process



## Random Selections of What I've Been Writing Off-Line

"In the sense that the MWT philosophy incorporates not only what managers actually do but also what processes, behaviours, and values select who gets to be a manager it goes beyond management to governance."

"The information in the MWT model lets anybody in the organisation audit the management practices; that is, what values are actually managing the organisation. This sort of corporate scouting can only improve governance."

"Analysis of corporate governance scandals has made one vital mistake. It has blamed either faceless entities like 'Enron', or the people charge.

What specifically is to blame is the mechanisms that put these individuals in power - not their actions once they were in power. Once they were in power they did what they always would have.

Sure, absolute power does corrupt, and an MWT philosophy would limit absolute power in a very specific sense, but if all corporate position was corrupting there would be no good companies and I do not believe that is the case."

"MWT is not against hierarchy. Hierarchy is a very natural form of organising responsibility. It's just not a good way of organising the type of information required for collaboration."

"This information includes even simple collaborative information like descriptions of service offerings or delivery processes."

"This book is not suggesting that all managers are bad (simply that what we think of as management is bad and good managers are doing things totally differently).

My workmates and I have had a number of fabulous managers to whom this book is partially dedicated.

However, my workmates often refer to the 'luck' they have had getting to work with such good managers. I hope that this book can take some of the luck out of that process.

More importantly, such exceptional managers are in demand. Much of your efforts will be in improving your own work so that they find you."

"Part 3 of this book is a guide to action. A simple handbook for organising your workgroups and hooking into high-level programs your corporation already has.

These are not notes towards a revolution. There will be no 'worker's states'; only leapfrogging the uninvolved to make your own work-life more satisfying. Or if your audits fail - give you the impetus to finally leave that doomed organisation and interview some others with your new knowledge."

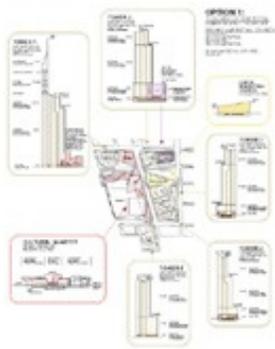
posted by Matthew at [5:07 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, May 01, 2003

## WTC Design Artefacts

Ã Just looking at the [WTC Site Memorial Competition](#). What's interesting is that the press coverage of this project will mean that millions of people will see these intriguing design artefacts:

<http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/press/pressimages.html>



posted by Matthew at [5:04 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, April 22, 2003

### So; Why am I so interested in architecting?

This is covering some familiar ground but I was recently asked why I get excited by 'architect' roles?

Basically, it's because I think the whole concept of 'architecting' is missing from management theory (and therefore most organisations). I think architecting is basically creating a delineated shared understanding of how a bunch of people collaborate.

I see architecting as an alternative (more mature) collaborative model to the manager/managed relationship. We talk a lot about moving away from command-and-control organisations but it's darn near impossible to change an organisation by just saying what you're not allowed to do. You have to provide an alternative behaviour.

Economics tells us that the alternative to 'command' is 'market' but I don't think it helps organisations to go to a strict laissez-faire market model. I think the middle-ground is to build something I'd call a 'collaboration architecture' which structures the 'market' of ideas (and of activities). Such a collaboration architecture conceptually comes before the usual

planning, monitoring, controlling steps of management. So you find that even the project manager starts to collaborate with the team (!) in terms of the collaboration architecture.

In a way this is just accelerating that normal storming, forming, and norming of team dynamics; but in a way which provides something tangible (and therefore reusable!).

I have a particular interest in the IT Services industry where these sort of roles are called 'systems architects' or 'enterprise architects'. While there might be lots of people in the industry with the right skills, what is always missing is the acknowledgement of the role itself (and how it differs from something you might call high-level solution 'design').

People with the appropriate skills need to think deeply enough about those skills so that they can be scaled to any sized endeavour.

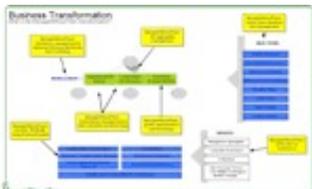
So, think deeply!

posted by Matthew at [5:01 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, April 14, 2003

### Speaking of Visualisation

I have started the process of visualising the ManageWithoutThem business transformation. The initial graphic (as yet unannotated) can be found by clicking the thumbnail image below:



(AvantGo users will need to visit [www.ManageWithoutThem.com](http://www.ManageWithoutThem.com))

posted by Matthew at [4:59 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, April 11, 2003

### Collaboration Architectures and Visualisation

The ManageWithoutThem model recognises that effective management requires a 'collaboration architecture' which transcends the traditional manager/managed relationship.

While researching for the MWT introductory brochure I am currently writing I came across this thesis which should be of interest to all:

[http://www.cs.vu.nl/~ziv/papers/baida\\_thesis.pdf](http://www.cs.vu.nl/~ziv/papers/baida_thesis.pdf)

The introduction states:

'The goal of this research project is investigating how architectures can be visualized to support the decision-making process of business managers. The project focuses on three levels of architectures: enterprise architecture, domain architecture and system architecture.'

Notice the emphasis on the quality of decisions rather than just concentrating on who makes the decision.

posted by Matthew at [4:58 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, January 30, 2003

### Quote Me

"Management is the art of saying 'Good Question' until you find somebody to blame"

- MDG

posted by Matthew at [2:57 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, January 21, 2003

### Limits of Subjectivity

How about some interesting stuff on the limits of subjectivity rolled up in a presentation about how architecture (buildings and such) is like IT!??!

I quote (emphasis added by me):

"The essence of the experiments is that you take the two things you are trying to compare and ask, for each one, **is my wholeness increasing in the presence of this object?** How about in the presence of this one? Is it increasing more or less? You might say this is a strange question; What if the answer is Don't know or They don't have any effect on me? Perfectly reasonable! That can happen. But the resolution is easy. What turns out to happen is that if you say to a person  $\tilde{\hat{\Delta}}_i^{\hat{\Delta}} \frac{1}{2}$  Yes, it is a difficult question, it might even sound a bit nutty. But anyway, please humor me and just answer the question.  $\tilde{\hat{\Delta}}_i^{\hat{\Delta}} \frac{1}{2}$  Then **it turns out that there is quite a striking statistical agreement, 80-90%, very strong, as strong a level of agreement as one gets in any experiments in social science.**"

- from <http://www.patternlanguage.com/archive/ieee/ieeetext.htm>

The possibility of an objective and universal sense of 'wholeness' is pretty cool, I think... Something like a person's 'wholeness' smells like mumbo-jumbo and yet here is somebody sighting 'striking statistical agreement' on what it is...?

posted by Matthew at [2:55 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Origins of Pattern Theory

Just a link for now (handheld users will have to read it at their desks I'm afraid):

The Origins of Pattern Theory  
the Future of the Theory,  
And The Generation of a Living World

<http://www.patternlanguage.com/archive/ieeee/ieeetext.htm>

This is the author of the forthcoming book mentioned in the previous post. I'll try and make some comments in the next few days.

In particular the author talks about the patterns he developed for architecture (as in buildings and such) actually having a 'moral' component. He suggests that the next step to translating the concept of design patterns to IT will introduce this moral component.

I think he's right.

posted by Matthew at [2:55 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, January 20, 2003

### Steal Their Word, Steal Their Theory

I talk about architectures all the time; and I therefore talk about architects - the people who design those architectures.

I'm stealing a word here - I'm not the only one. The whole IT industry also does it. So I'll admit I'm looking forward to [this series](#) (link to Amazon) coming out in July.

The first book in the series is:

[The Nature of Order: An Essay on the Art of Building and the Nature of the Universe. The Phenomenon of Life, Book One](#)

by Christopher Alexander

MWT talks about architect as the delineated shared understanding of a team of collaborating individuals. This shared environment could include anything, I guess - includes good old physical shared space - but I imagine the principles of designing such architectures are more universal than that.

The Amazon review says things like:

'Christopher Alexander, the humble messiah of good architectural design, invites readers to get comfortable with their inner judgments... thinking deeply about the nature of his work. Frustrated with the 20th century's reluctance to acknowledge human commonality and reliance on Cartesian mechanism, he urges us to rethink our understanding of space itself..'

The IT industry has already stolen the concept of 'design patterns' from people like this author - and that was for the better. Let's steal some more.

posted by Matthew at [2:54 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, January 14, 2003

### Human Warmth

"When Josef Stalin was on his deathbed he called in two likely successors, to test which one of the two had a better knack for ruling the country.

"He ordered two birds to be brought in and presented one bird to each of the two candidates.

"The first one grabbed the bird, but was so afraid that the bird could free himself from his grip and fly away that he squeezed his hand very hard, and when he opened his palm, the bird was dead.

"Seeing the disapproving look on Stalin's face and being afraid to repeat his rival's mistake, the second candidate loosened his grip so much that the bird freed himself and flew away.

"Stalin looked at both of them scornfully. "Bring me a bird!" he ordered.

They did.

"Stalin took the bird by its legs and slowly, one by one, he plucked all the feathers from the bird's little body.

"Then he opened his palm. The bird was laying there naked, shivering, helpless.

"Stalin looked at him, smiled gently and said, "You see... and he is even thankful for the human warmth coming out of my palm." "

- taken from [Rich Geib's Universe](#)

posted by Matthew at [2:52 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, January 06, 2003

### Governance Silo

Remember when everybody was complaining about [stove-pipe organisations](#) ½ organisations in which all the departments were operating as silos?

Well I've noticed a new trend. The more I see 'governance offices' and 'programme offices' in action the more it is apparent that governance, monitoring, scheduling, etc, are starting to operate in their own silos!



- to 'use' a mental technology such as management is to simply have a shared understanding of certain things

The question is then 'what to share?'. This is where the Epistemology page mentioned above might be useful. In the section on 'Specifics' it lists Concepts, Definitions, Words, Emotions, Integration, Values, Certainly, Deduction, Induction/Abstraction, Focus, and Evasion.

That list overlaps nicely with what a MWT management philosophy for cross-discipline collaboration might suggest you focus a shared understanding on.

posted by Matthew at [2:47 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, December 24, 2002

### More Understanding

#### In Our Own Time

Another Excerpt

"Why can't you be more understanding?" Kellie was yelling in whispers and trying to ignore Andrew. She cleared, set, and re-cleared all the tables that were sufficiently distant from any customers.

David watched the pattern of a familiar argument unfold. This time he was determined to intervene with what he considered final and conclusive answers; he stepped forward in assistance.

"You keep out of it!"

David figured she'd appreciate his input once she heard what he had to say. "There simply isn't any such thing as somebody who is 'more understanding'". David used his fingers to place the phrase in quotes, though it was hardly appropriate. "There are people who understand more, and there are frauds. You can't be more understanding unless you actually understand more."

"Michael is more understanding." Kellie clearly wasn't, thought David, as he continued.

"I think you'll find Michael is just as bewildered as Andrew is. His special 'understanding' lies in knowing what you want and giving it to you regardless of his level of comprehension."

"Yes! That's exactly right. What's wrong with that?"

"What's wrong with it is that it's fraudulent. It neglects that fact that people are more than just their relationships with other people. They have this intrinsic measure of how much they actually understand  $\tilde{\hat{\Delta}}^{\hat{\Delta}}\hat{\Delta}^{\frac{1}{2}}$  and surely this should be the primary factor in determining how understanding they appear to be."

"Well - intrinsically - understands Michael understand more."

"I doubt it. I'd suggest you ask him to explain."

Apparently, Kellie played that scenario through in her head. She retorted, "It doesn't make any difference!", with the implication that Michael's attempts at explanation probably wouldn't assist her argument.

"Maybe that's the problem. Maybe to you there is no difference. Maybe it doesn't matter to you how somebody actually feels about you, as long as you get..."

"Maybe you're afraid to show how you feel. Maybe you're afraid to actually do anything! You're all talk you know!"

Andrew was silent; but he was obviously keen to resume what he considered *his* argument. David, rather conveniently, finally chose to return Andrew his baton; there was a sudden desire to spend some time in the basement at the library.

posted by Matthew at [1:42 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, December 18, 2002

### Commanding Heights

Readers in the US may have already come across PBS series 'The Commanding Heights'. Australian readers, I'm sorry to say, I've told you about it one day too late - ½ the final part was on SBS last night.

The series compliments the book of the same name (Both the [book](#) and the [DVD](#) of the series are available from Amazon. Christmas presents perhaps?)

The book is a history of the global economy over the past 50 years or so with a focus on the battle between governments and markets.

Remember 'The Incredible Shrinking Management' MWT article? As the global economy changed over the last 50 years, so will organisational management in the next 50 (sooner, probably).

Just check out the Amazon reviews for the types of resistance you're going to get on the way to market-based management of the firm.

For more info try [www.commandingheights.com](http://www.commandingheights.com).

As a bonus, the existence of the Commanding Heights book and series revives my faith in [EDS](#). The production of the series was partially sponsored by EDS.

posted by Matthew at [1:40 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, December 12, 2002

### Do as I say, not what I do!

After trying to convince everybody I've met for the last few years that they should write fiction, somebody was bound to ask the obvious: 'Why don't you do it yourself?'... It starts like this.

*Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or me, is entirely coincidental.* I'm seriously not this loathsome a

character (you've gotta beleive me! :-).

## In Our Own Time

by MDG

"Damn beige boxes!". I flipped the keyboard across the desk. The clatter of the keys was tremendous; precisely the effect I'd wanted to achieve. It was all very passionate, all very *tortured genius*. This was certainly the tantrum of a man about to crack. This was an unanswerable cry for help. Unanswerable because I was crying the for the loneliness of being without peers. Crying for the absence of challenge and endeavours worthy of my intellect.

"What's wrong?". Well, nothing specifically. I didn't even have any idea of what I'd been working on. Actually, I think I was simply reading some emails. There was a report to be done but I hadn't really started yet; how could I? I'd emailed a few questions about which template to use the night before and hadn't received a response ~~~~~ once again I was waiting around for everybody else.

"I've just lost my file". How long should I say I'd been working on this imaginary file? 2 hours? 2 days? How much work could I claim to have lost without somebody suggesting I call tech. support and let them snoop through my hard drive? I didn't know what was in this damn beige box and I didn't want anybody else knowing. I'd received an email the other day claiming that it was possible to see every web site I'd looked at for months. Did this include when I clicked on a pictured in an unsolicited email? Was I not supposed to click on those images?

"Did you save it? Did you make a backup?". Of course I made a backup! I'm not stupid. I know how to use these contraptions ~~~~~ I just find them infernal. Or at least I would have saved it. But there is no file ~~~~~ I wasn't working on a file! I just wanted everybody to know I was upset. Don't they understand ~~~~~ this isn't about the file. "Yes; I have a backup from this morning".

"That's not too bad then". Yes. But I'm still frustrated. Remember; I just threw my keyboard. Surely, that's something you have to talk to me about? Maybe we should call Workplace Health and Safety or something ~~~~~ this is a serious incident. There must be a report that we're supposed to fill out.

I wish I hadn't moved the glass of water on my desk before I tossed the keyboard. It would have been knocked over for sure. Those papers on the left would have definitely been ruined. The ink from those flyers would have certainly stained the desk. There was quite a bit of water in the glass ~~~~~ some of it would have leaked off into my lap. I'd have had to stand up cursing and brushing water off my pants. "Yeah. Shouldn't hold me back too much. I'll just use the backup."

For the rest of the day I kept to myself. I climbed up on a swivel chair to remove an old Christmas decoration; I moved a computer monitor from one desk to another without using a trolley; I emptied all the coffee pots and didn't refill them; I loudly performed all the nasty bits from all two gangster rap songs I could recall; and I replied to the CEO's weekly email with an equally banal account of my week, and how I thought it might be beneficial if he saw things from my perspective, how I valued his opinion, and how I welcomed any feedback he might have on my strategy.

Nobody complained. I wasn't sacked. I didn't think about Leisa once. I left work early to visit the local library and my friend Minuet.

Minuet was an unrequited childhood sweetheart turned dear old friend. Friendship hadn't been my idea ~~~~~ I guess she simply got sick I me following her around and making her papier-m~~~~ roses. Not that I ever sent her the roses. In fact, a papier-m~~~~ rose needs to be rather large and awkward if you ever hope to get the level of detail right.

She was shy and unconfident growing up. Unfortunately, she was also stunningly beautiful and therefore much of the population took the lack of confidence as laziness, and the shyness as snobbishness. My experience with Minuet has made

me reluctant to make such denouncements of the beautiful; even though I've learnt the generalisations to be largely reliable.

As Minuet dusted shelves and made faces at what I judged were hideous misfilings and unforgivable abuses of the dewy-decimal system, I explained to her each and every variation of how little I'd thought of Leisa all day.

Minuet never tired of these conversations. She would respectfully comment that I felt things more deeply than most people and that it moved her. There was something about the way she said it, however, that implied I could move her til the cows come home but it still wasn't normal and she was pretty pleased it was me and not her.

I'd met Leisa nine months before and instantly fallen in love with her. For me there was no other way of falling in love with anybody. So much so, that I would sometimes have to retrospectively play the mental trick of having always loved somebody, when at first I hadn't really noticed them.

It actually helped to badger and abuse every mildly attractive woman that you met just in case you later took a fancy to them and had to sight examples of telltale signs that you really liked them all along. Perhaps this process was a little counter-productive; now I think about it.

Anyway, Leisa had been different. In fact, I don't think I'd even gone to the bother of meeting her before I'd started to fall in love. There is a precedent to this, I believe, in an Oscar Wilde play  $\tilde{\hat{A}}_i \hat{A}^{1/2}$  and not surprisingly, I read quite a bit of Oscar Wilde leading up to Leisa's arrival. So the whole process just seemed to be such a quaint thing to try.

As a new start at the company I worked for, Leisa was to undergo 2 weeks of training. The training would be conducted by about 6 different employees rotating as teachers. This was based on the premise that while two continuous weeks of teaching in a corporate environment would be utterly unbearable, two continuous weeks of corporate education couldn't be avoided.

It was 6 days into Leisa's (and three other three non-descript new starts  $\tilde{\hat{A}}_i \hat{A}^{1/2}$ ) training before I even saw her. But she was spoken about. She was not held above the others in any way but her name stood out. I latter wondered if it was just because it was spelt wrong. I'd seen it written in emails and on training materials and perhaps I was just a sucker for slightly exotic spelling?

The truth is it didn't make any sense. That I loved this woman before I met her must have been pure magic. Had we spent the rest of our lives together it would have been something that I repeated too often to grand-children and aged-care nurses but now it seemed 'I loved her before I met her' was the ramblings of a very pathetic man indeed  $\tilde{\hat{A}}_i \hat{A}^{1/2}$  determined not to get over things and move on.

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Hmmm... And there's already more of the same... Continue?

posted by Matthew at [1:38 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Guess Who's Back, Back again...

I'm back - both in the sense that the hacking of my site has been fixed and that I think I've managed to put to bed some recent and distracting personal problems.

Both experiences have left a rather bitter taste in my mouth. It appears some people are so vapid that other human beings only register as mildly curious social experiments... and hackers annoy me too. :-)

I'm currently working in Brisbane (for the next few months at least) spending every couple of weekends in Sydney. I also have no mobile phone, so email is the best / only way to contact me.

Regarding my site being hacked. Good news is it appears that nobody viewing my web site or the AvantGo channel was at risk. I do, however, apologise for the inconvenience and alarm this may have caused.

I've just added tonight's article called 'Management by Inspecting, Governance by Sampling', which is simply an example of 'rule by law'; acknowledging that such an approach must apply to the managers and the managed. My definition of 'management' as opposed to 'governance' is also based on this.

posted by Matthew at [1:37 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Thursday, September 26, 2002

### New MWT Poster

Thank you to everybody for the feedback on the last ManageWithoutThem poster. A [new poster](#) has been uploaded into the Posters section.

ManageWithoutThem posters can be found in the MWT Model section (AvantGo users will have to visit the site).

I'm afraid this new poster is going to sound a little anti-management and cynical; but I'm just trying to even the game. I still have my morbid fascination with 'management'.

The poster is entitled 'I'm Sorry... Is my work interfering with your management, again?'

posted by Matthew at [3:25 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, September 10, 2002

### Worship a Librarian - I Do! :-)

My lovely and charming partner Sara has recently expressed the desire to become a librarian. I am therefore absolutely compelled to spread this link. It also sums up Sara in many ways... (well it does, Sara! :-)

Why you should fall to your knees and Worship a Librarian  
[www.librarianavengers.com/library.html](http://www.librarianavengers.com/library.html)

Again, management of information IS management!

posted by Matthew at [3:24 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Knowledge Management Equals Management?

Knowledge Management is often (I think mistakenly) seen as a subset of Management. Or worse still, knowledge is seen as just something else which needs to be managed.

I think Knowledge Management should be considered a super-set of management. What is traditionally thought of as management information (plans, strategies, tasks, resource and capability information) is just one particular type of information which needs to be managed.

Of course, it follows from the argument in my previous post to say that if the division of labour = the division of knowledge, then the management of knowledge = the management of labour.

More importantly, if you look at how you manage knowledge you will get clues as to how you might manage in general.

At the moment how you manage knowledge is through taxonomies, information architectures, certain semantic web constructs, etc. - detailed commentary of which you can find at:

Andrew Newman's MoreNews  
[morenews.blogspot.com](http://morenews.blogspot.com)

Look out for a convergence between the language used to describe the management of knowledge and the language used to describe management in general.

posted by Matthew at [3:22 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Friday, September 06, 2002

### Problems creating multi-disciplinary change

I'm currently reading through Hayek's 'The Road to Serfdom'. The tone of the book often reflects its place in history in relation to WWII; for better and for worse.

I particularly like the observation that the personal attributes and values that make self-organisation possible are the same ones that make centralised control more difficult.

This is the problem with creating multi-disciplinary change. We have this intermediate non-stable state where things are difficult for everybody.

I am, of course, not the only one trying to understand how things like Austrian Economics apply to the organisation of firms. If you don't mind academic papers you might want to check out:

The Organisation of Large, Complex Firms: an Austrian View  
<http://www.cbs.dk/departments/ivs/wp/wp99-7.pdf>

It makes the claim that there is a fundamental distinction between 'simple' and 'complex' firms relating to the 'division of knowledge' brought about by the division of labour. It suggests (as I do) that complex firms require a market-based

analysis.

The division of knowledge a re-occurring theme for Hayek; the classic is:

Hayek, F.A., The Use of Knowledge in Society  
<http://www.econlib.org/library/Essays/hykKnw1.html>

posted by Matthew at [3:20 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, September 04, 2002

### Death by Management

On entering your MBA the first lesson you learn is that management equals Planning, Monitoring, and Controlling. I've been trying to replace this simple definition with something equally compelling linguistically.

I tried words like Architecting, Acting, etc. That is, my definition involved 'verbs'. I couldn't do it and decided that my current motif of 'Management = Operationalised Brands + Technology-Augmented Markets + Collaboration Architectures' still holds true.

I think the trick is to use nouns in the definition. You can't equate management itself with something people actually do. That sort of definition deteriorates into 'rule by man' instead of 'rule by brand'. Also, if we equate the definition of management with something that people actually do we run into another problem...

The generally accepted model of 'management' has no decent feedback mechanism (except more management). Once something is designated a 'management' task it suddenly doesn't require a value proposition or justification. Because of this the distinction between mediocre and exemplary performance of the task is blurred and continuous improvement is never achieved.

David Weinberger once suggested to me that my Planning, Monitoring, Controlling definition of management was a little limited. Off the top of his head he added things like mentoring, performance management, etc.

However, I believe that David himself was responsible for the view expressed in Cluetrain that heaven forbid we come up with 'conversation management'. With the current model of management; management equals death.

This death by management can already be seen for planning, monitoring, and controlling functions. For all the talk I really don't think these functions have improved in years. Even in technology related to these functions (such as ERPs) the improvements in techniques, user interfaces, etc have left a lot to be desired.

Granted, management tasks suffer from a mystic that they cannot be automated. Oh dear; I'm going to loss some subscribers who think I'm being 'technocratic'. But this is just a result of the mystic around so-called management tasks.

Technocratic rule is simple rule by the experts  $\tilde{\hat{A}}_i \hat{A}^{1/2}$  rule by the scientists or engineers. But we tend to think 'information technology' when we see 'techno' these days. We think such thinking is coming from the computer specialists.

But technocratic rule is rule by ANY particular specialised group. Rule by the specialisation know as 'managers' is equally as technocratic as rule by the engineers.

(Hey, this blog thing is great. I can write without making too much sense but it's all okay because it's not an 'article' :-)

posted by Matthew at [3:16 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Monday, September 02, 2002

### New MWT 'Blog

Welcome to the MWT 'Blog.

This is a new 'Blog for Matthew De George and the ManageWithoutThem site. The Blog will be used to record additional content which is not in full article form. Articles will continue to be written.

I'm not sure how successful this will be actually. I don't read many other people's 'Blogs but somehow not doing so has convinced me to start my own.



Now in 'Blog!

Also new to the site is an about page for [Matthew De George](#).

Perhaps it's because I've tied the launch of my 'Blog with the launch of an 'About Me' page; but this is feeling rather embarrassing. Also, I completed [this test](#) today and it determined I was (among other uncomplimentary things) 'Narcissistic'. This is almost certainly going to prove that hypotheses.

Anyway, enjoy... or otherwise.

posted by Matthew at [3:15 AM](#) | [1 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Wednesday, November 07, 2001

November MWT article - DRAFT

James Joyce, author of Finnegans Wake, The Dubliners, and Ulysses, doesn't know much about people or cities; or at least not by the standards of modern organisational recruitment mentality. You see, Mr Joyce has spewed out hundreds of pages all set in Dublin. He did explore other cities in his writing - just Dublin. His curriculum vitae doesn't even contain any 'projects' in the Big 5 cities - like London, Paris, New York, San Francisco, Vienna.

How could somebody who's spent so much time focused on the one organisation (pardon, city) know anything about cities

in general? Any yet, George Bernard Shaw has said that 'you can see every city in the world in Joyce's Dublin'.

Joyce's focus on a particular city appears to have paid off. Through Dublin he is able to understand, communicate, and make grandiose the daily activities of any and every city. In this way Joyce understands a city in it's people. Had he spread his time across a large number of cities he would know no more about cities than Don Juan knows about women.

But it's not as simple as that. Because Don Juan clearly knows a lot about women. By shifting his affections with each passing day, the Don learns to see the similarities between his lovers. His knowledge of that class of things - that fairer sex - is that of the similarities between them. The constant changes allow him to discover the essence of a class of things called 'women'.

But we all know that this is where Don Juan fails. Knowledge based on the similarities is knowledge of the collective group. One it comes to intimate knowledge of a particular women Don Juan fails. When it comes to intimate knowledge of a city, of its people, Joyce knows more because he has even experiences it - based on his intimate knowledge of one.

Knowledge intellectual abstractions - groups and generalisations of people - are a knowledge of similarities. Intimate knowledge of individuals - of one individual or many - is knowledge of differences.

Don Juan knowledge of the intellectual abstraction of women had it's uses. As a pure exercise of skill he was able to woo and win many women. But in the longer term was did that do the women any good. Did it do Don Juan any good? Or the company he kept?

Joyce's intimate knowledge is more valuable, more scalable. Never did he even explore the whole of Dublin. No epic tomb of Dublin emerged in the manner of a James Mechner Mexico, Hawie; or Kim Stanley Robinsons Mars. Strictly speaking Joyce only captured a few streets within the city of Dublin. And through those streets we become intimate with Dublin itself; and only then with 'every city'.

Fast forward to the business and management world of today. We have invented a mentality that ostracises the Joyce's while rewarding the Don Juan's who hope from company to company leaving a trail of broken hearts and promises.

As these Don Juan's build there skills they will continue to woo and win hearts. But where there bread of abstract knowledge of similarities is, in itself, good for the company they keep, is yet to be seen.

What was missing all along was the organisation's ability to utilise and leverage the more intimate and softer knowledge. The Joyce style intimate knowledge of differences is more subtle - certainly more difficult to understand - but ultimately more rewarding.

Joyce style knowledge may will be found in the stayers, in an increasingly aging workforce, and in thoses whos confidence has not been artificially inflated by the light touch of a wondering winner of hearts. If is these groups that the management of the 20 century organisation must effectively coordinate.

posted by Matthew at [7:27 PM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) .

## Tuesday, February 13, 2001

Thanks to my current boss at EDS I've starting to think about the Software and Services components of ManageWithoutThem again. The plan has always been to develop a combination Service Desk, People Desk, and Project Desk which would complement the ManageWithoutThem principles.

The theory is that new ways of managing will require new tools.

I want to work on the principles first, rather than jump in and write 'best practices' software. The basic principles of 'the desks' might be:

- distributed
- reality based - that is, if the project has an issue it should appear as a matter of course - unfiltered (at least in stats)
- entity level updates - projects, people, services
- multiple views of the same data - competencies, practice, project, program
- access anywhere - if you've got an ISP you can get to it

posted by Matthew at [1:53 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) \_

## Thursday, February 01, 2001

This is my first post to the Blog. I am wondering if this will provide anything more than the article content management I have built into my ManageWithoutThem.com web site. It might be a good replacement for the IdeaOrigami part of the site. This approach will also save space and reduce response time on my site.

posted by Matthew at [2:53 AM](#) | [0 comments](#) | [Link](#) \_

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## About

Accompanies the ManageWithoutThem market-based management model described at ManageWithoutThem.com. Includes commentary on collaboration architectures, operationalised brands, technology-enabled markets, and technology-enabled business transformation.



## About Me



**Name:** Matthew

**Location:** Sydney, AU

Writing about my life or market-based management and IT management - depending on the blog.

[View my complete profile](#)

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