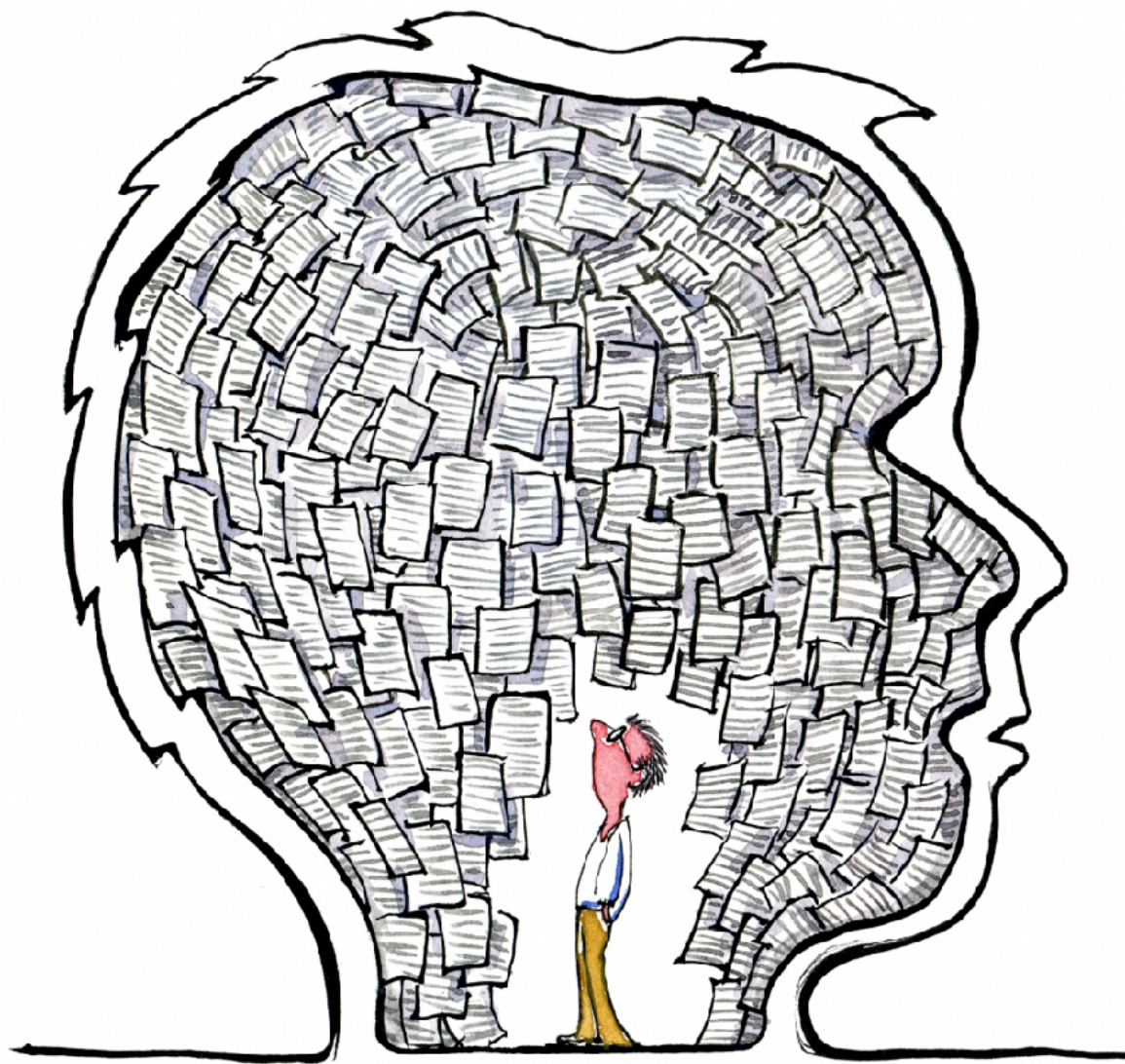


Theories of Work: Origins of the Design and Management of Work



By David Joyce

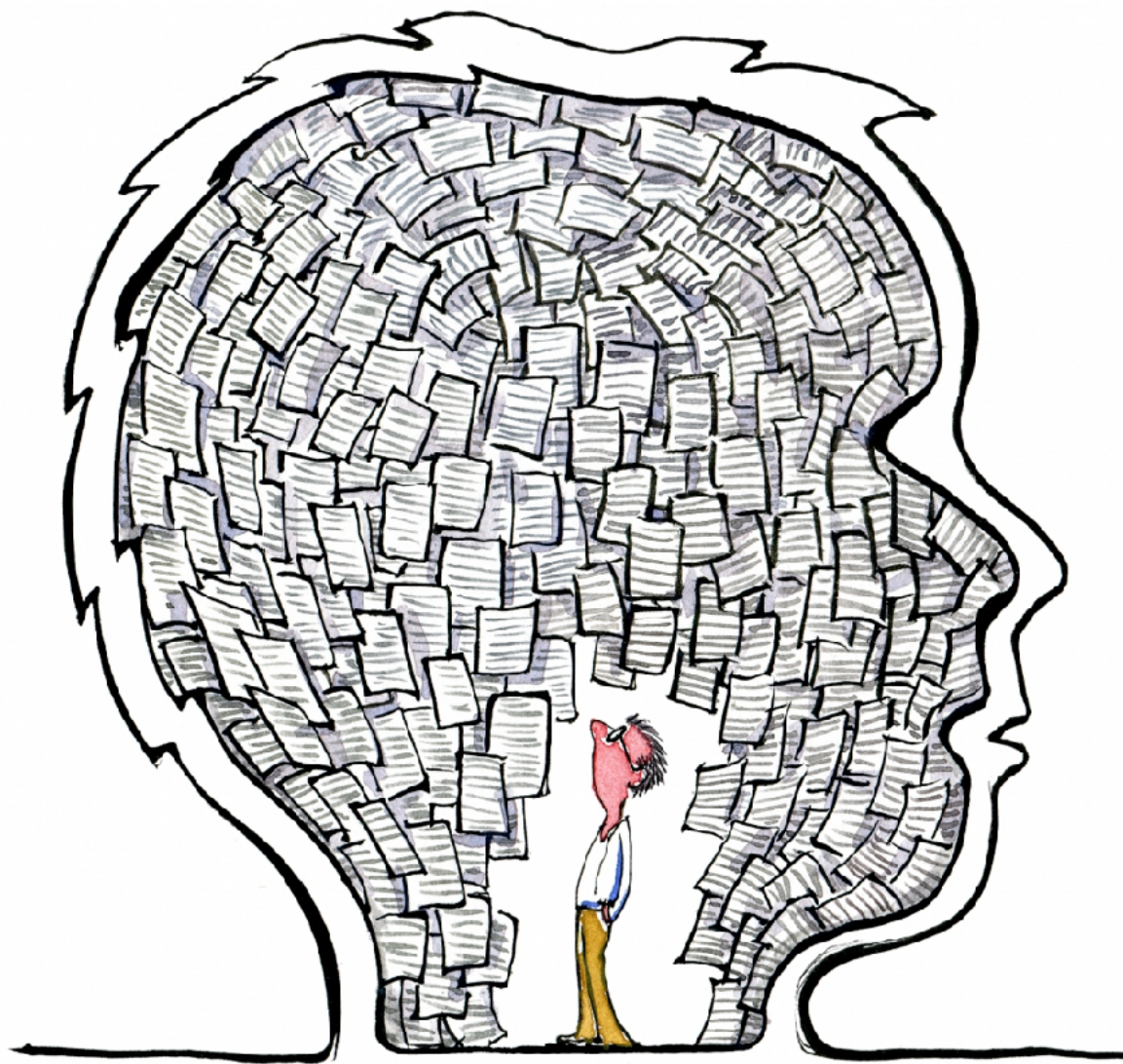
www.theoriesofwork.com

Copyright © 2013-2022 by David Joyce.

All rights reserved.

This material, or any part thereof, may not be reproduced, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photo-copying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission.

Theories of Work: Origins of the Design and Management of Work



By David Joyce

— Introduction —

Look around the organisation you are in now, for now, or think about organisations you have worked in during your career, how is it designed, how is it managed?

Think about it, look around you, is there a manual that people follow? What theories are used for the work, the people who do the work, and the way work is done?¹¹

These questions have often come to my mind throughout my career as I worked in a variety of organisations, observing; common patterns, structures, methods, theories in use, dysfunctions, and failed attempts to change.

I observed these commonalities replicated across industries, domains, and countries. Replicated in organisations private and public, large and small, from established companies to startups.

¹¹ www.systemsthinking.co.uk Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

This prevailing theory of work has become the accepted norm, almost undiscussable; it is just the way we do it, the way we have always done it; why would we do anything different?

This led to a need to understand the roots of how we design and manage work, what I call the prevailing theory of work.

Whilst researching the design and management truisms that are accepted as the norm, I was surprised to find that many were invented a long, long time ago, yet haven't been reinvented, and are rarely questioned.

This seemed odd to me, as over that same time period, many other things have been invented and reinvented, and yet, these workplace norms remain.

In this book, I will uncover the history of what we currently accept as the norms for designing and managing work, looking at each of the main protagonists; pioneers, inventors,

influencers and implementers of a collection of ideas: ideas that solved problems at different points in time²³ in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, that are still very much in use today, and seem remarkably impervious to change.

There have been many alternative theories of work offered, however, when applied, they all rebound off the status quo, and the prevailing theory of work remains.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS WORK

I chose a free online format for this book as I wanted to make this work “open-source”, so that its contents could easily spread; I am not interested in making money from it, I am more interested that nothing inhibits a reader from reading it.

Perhaps for the people involved in the world of

work today it will lead them to question the status quo and create something better. For other people either studying, or soon to enter work, it may be of benefit in some way; as they will be the next generation who, instead of recreating the past, might create something better.

This book has been a labour of love, written in my spare time; at weekends, on the train to and from work, in the evenings when most people are unwinding from a hard day at work, late into the night when the rest of the family were asleep, at an airport, on a plane; anywhere I could grab a few moments.

I hope you enjoy it, and find it stimulating enough, that perhaps it makes you curious to question the status quo, intrigues you to want to learn more, or perhaps inspires you to go and try something different and create something better.

²³ 540-A brief history of Western management thought, Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

In the age of digital, and changing customer and employee expectations, breaking with the past is even more critical. Since first being published in 2013, this book has been read by over 36,000 people in 160 countries. Readers continually write to me to express how surprised they were when they learned the roots of how today's workplaces are designed and managed, and even more surprised that they recognise much of it still in use in their own organisations.

REFERENCES

As the reader, you will see that I have drawn upon the work of many authors, academics, scholars, publishers, institutes, and individuals to combine their work, and that of my own, into what I believe is a cohesive and interesting story.

Each chapter contains a Bibliography, where I

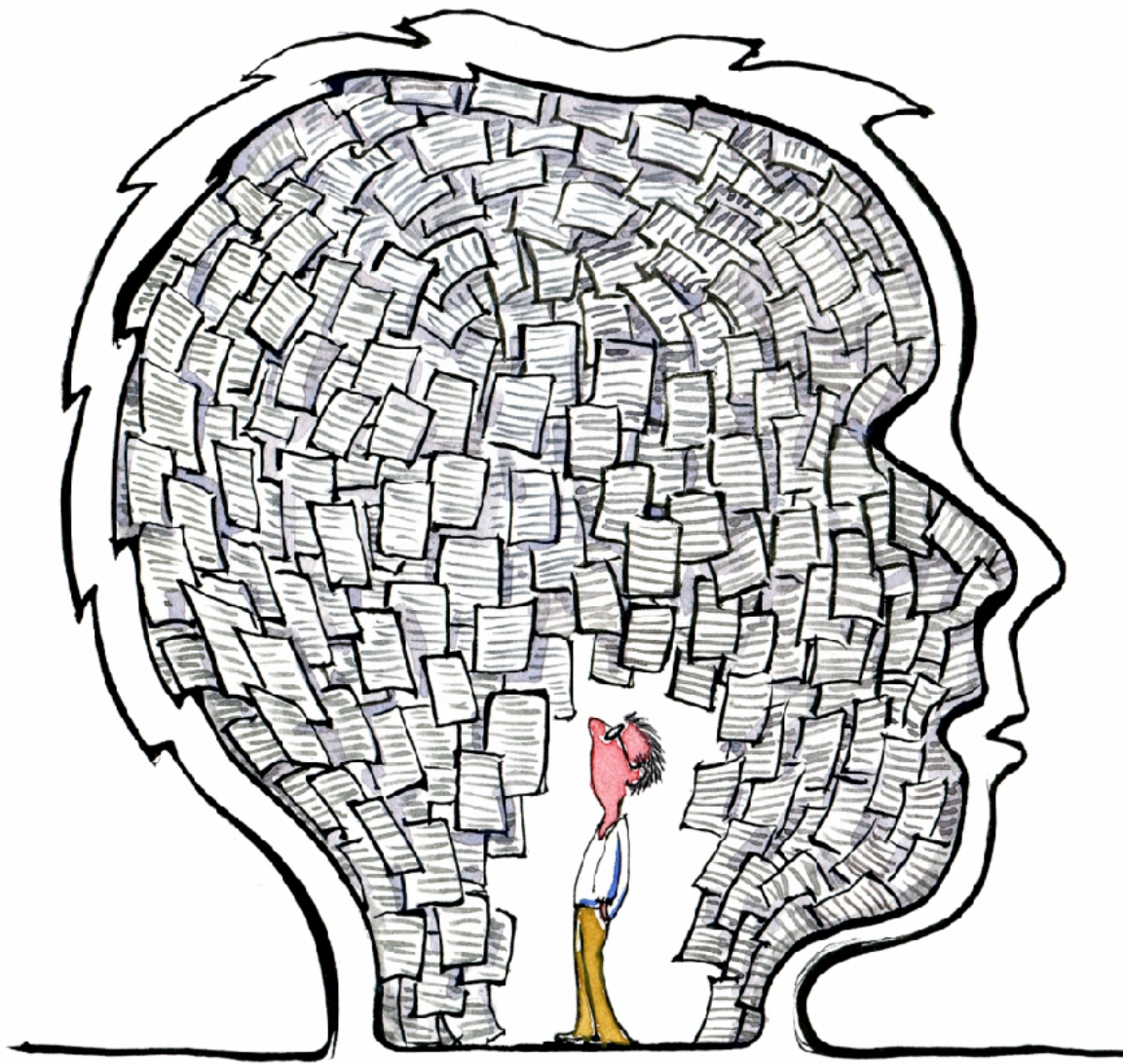
list all of the many many articles, books, papers, letters, interviews, emails and internet articles I have researched and drawn upon for this ebook.

I have taken great care to cite the source(s) of materials used and show provenance. If I have missed something then it was entirely unintentional, so please let me know and I will correct the error.

To make it easier for you the reader in terms of flow, and under the terms of Fair Use, I have taken what I believed to be the most salient points from these materials. Therefore, much of the content from the various sources is not replicated in full here.

As the Bibliography lists all the sources I recommend their reading, should you want to know more detail for any particular subject I cover.

Theories of Work: How We Design and Manage Work



By David Joyce

— Preface —

ORGANISATIONAL NORMS

Organisations are typically designed and structured as top down hierarchies, with an organisational chain of command; the classic org chart. For larger organisations they often have multi divisional structures, with federal decentralization; for example by product, by industry, or by country. This top-down perspective is essentially an internal view.¹¹

The organisational world is designed in the boardroom, and the parts of the organisation operate on the basis of needing to serve the purposes set by those above.¹²

¹¹ www.systemsthinking.co.uk Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

¹² The Vanguard Guide to Understanding your Organisation as a System,
Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited



Image: On the High Chair, Added Feb 13, 2013 Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist,
All Rights Reserved. [www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?](http://www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MDExZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.Uel8cRYspjY)
[mediaID=MDExZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.Uel8cRYspjY](http://www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MDExZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.Uel8cRYspjY)

Hierarchies encourage the view that people are there to serve the boss.¹⁴

Hierarchy also provides the means for allocating blame, usually described as “accountability”.

Top-down thinking is concerned with “make and sell”; the organisation determines the product, or service, that the customer will receive, and then goes about marketing, selling, and servicing it.¹²

There are frequent disagreements about how well the products and services will meet customer needs, with those closest to the customer often without a voice compared to those above making the decisions.

¹² The Vanguard Guide to Understanding your Organisation as a System,
Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited

¹⁴ Vanguard Guide to Process Mapping Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited

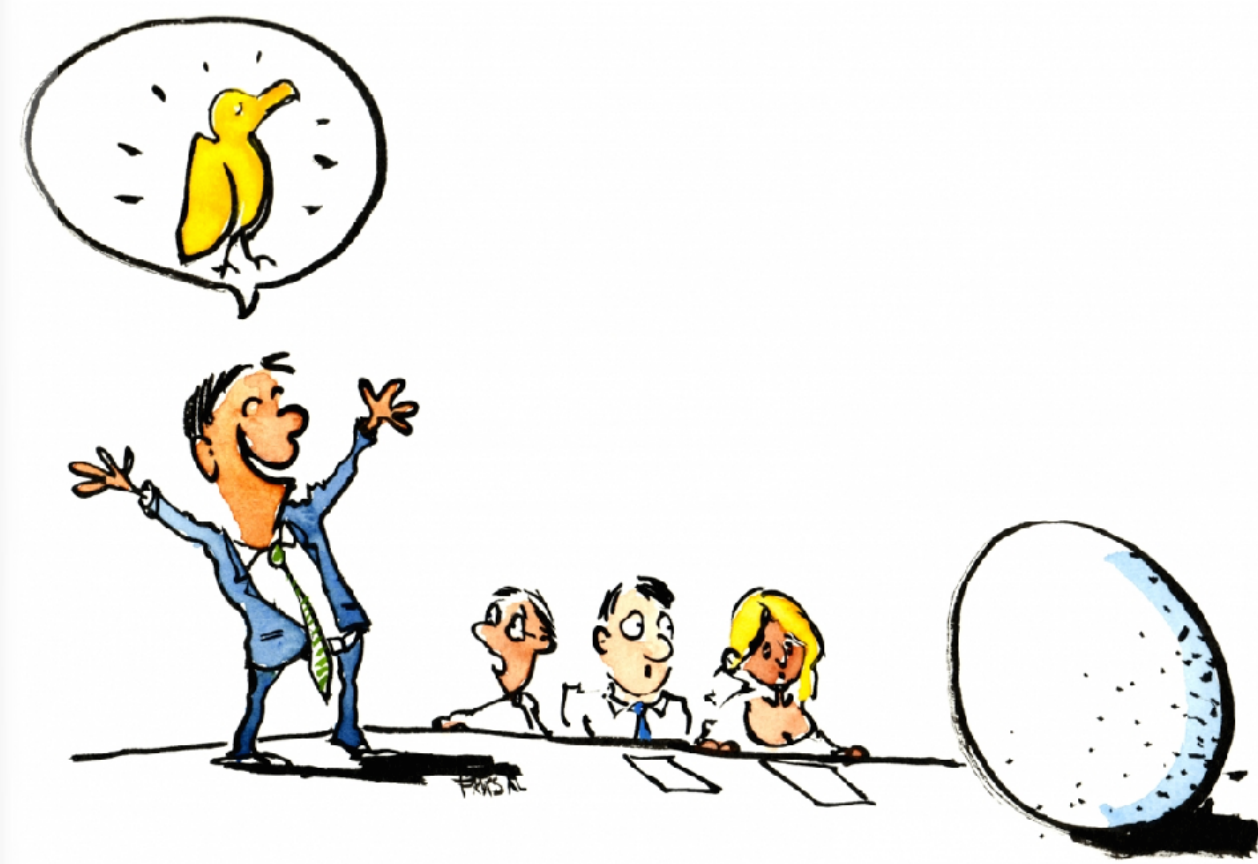


Image: Vision and reality, Added Feb 14, 2013 Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist,
All Rights Reserved. www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MTgyZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.UeJFRxYspJY

In many organizations, rigid unit boundaries, functional silos, and political fiefdoms hamper the rapid realignment of skills and assets.²

This occurs as it's common for work to be designed in functional specialisms to manage the different activities.¹¹

However, these functions take on a life of their own, particularly because of the measurement system.¹²

It also encourages people to work only within their functional boundaries, and not to be concerned with what is happening elsewhere.¹⁴

It's a theory based on the existing structure of businesses, for example sales, operations, HR, IT, etc.¹³

¹¹ www.systemsthinking.co.uk Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

¹² The Vanguard Guide to Understanding your Organisation as a System,
Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited

¹⁴ Vanguard Guide to Process Mapping
Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited Vanguard Consulting Limited



By Frits Ahlefeldt

¹³ 5 Mistakes Contact Center Managers Make, Tripp Babbitt
www.customermanagementiq.com/operations/articles/5-mistakes-contact-center-managers-make/

² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review. Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009. Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

Image: blocks illustration, Added: May 21, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved. www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=NTIzMWU4OTBkYjUiZmY=#.UeInSxYspJY

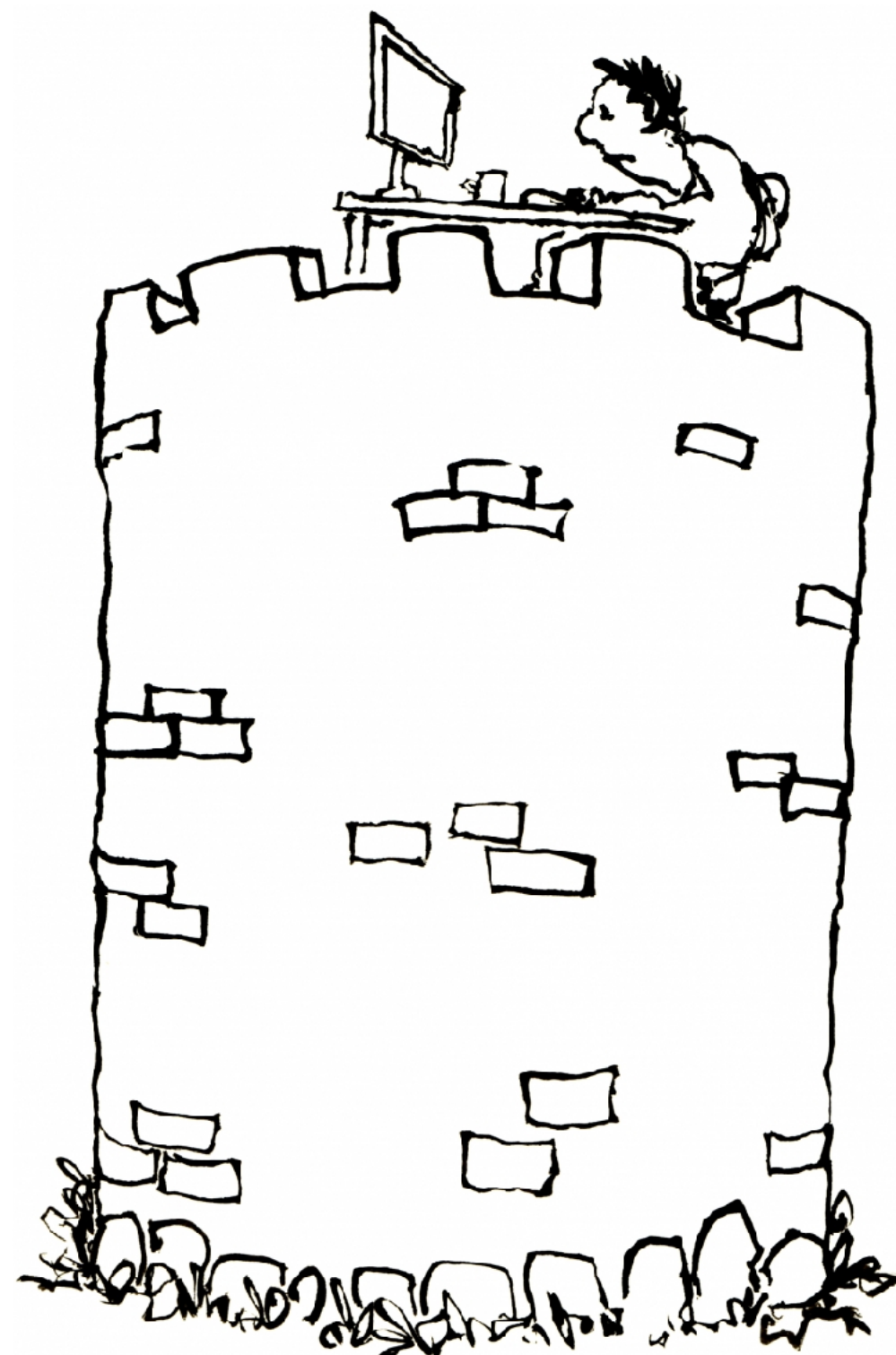
The white and blue collar workforce populate such organisations, with a clear division of labour; workers and managers.

Atop them all are Directors and Managing Directors.

Managers organise, they co-ordinate, they command, they control.

Each level of management uses a command and control style of management, as taught in management schools and the prevailing management literature.

In most languages, if you go to the thesaurus, and you look at the synonym for the word “manage,” the number one synonym is “control.”¹⁶



¹⁶ Leading by Letting Go – Charlene Li with Gary Hamel

www.innovationexcellence.com/blog/2011/08/17/leading-by-letting-go-charlene-li-with-gary-hamel/

Predominantly decision making is separated from work, decision making being management's job.

There is a separation of planning versus doing. Managers decide, workers do.

“The separation of decision-making from the work is the cornerstone of command and control thinking.”¹¹

John Seddon - Occupational Psychologist



¹¹ www.systemsthinking.co.uk Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

As it has been stated “Most managers give the same decision making opportunities to subordinates, as parents letting children ‘drive’ from the backseat”.

Command and control systems reflect a deep mistrust of employees’ commitment and competence.²

Traditional control systems ensure high levels of compliance.²

² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.

Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009.

Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

In many organisations knowledge work is viewed as a repetitive, readily controlled and manufacturing-like business;³ make our plans into reality, use your ingenuity whilst retaining accountability.

Autocratic management set productivity targets, some use management by fear; organisational discipline, do as you are told.

Other managers are “enlightened” and advocate bottom up management or “empowerment” programs. They ask for improvement ideas via staff suggestion schemes, and encourage organisational team spirit.

This gives the appearance of granting authority to employees without actually relinquishing power to them.

³ Leffingwell, Dean, “Agile Software Requirements”, Addison-Wesley, 2011.

¹⁵ Dew J, Root cause analysis: The seven deadly sins of quality management. quality Progress. 36(9): September 2003.

This “empowerment” then leads to endullment, which is the condition identified by Ira Shor as the opposite of empowerment.¹⁵

*“ Empowerment is preoccupation of managers who design systems that disempower people and then send them on empowerment programmes.”*²⁷⁹



²⁷⁹ www.systemsthinking.co.uk Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

Image: Good life, car, color illustration, Added: Apr 3, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved. www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=NTYxMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeIjchYspJY

The top-down, hierarchical view of the organisation is manifest in the way it uses measures.¹²

Today, managers make decisions about the work based upon arbitrary data like measures of budget, service levels, service standards, activity measures, productivity, standards, Service Level Agreements (SLAs), and targets, all of which are unrelated to what the customer values.¹¹

The main purpose of measurement is budgetary control; the organisation must meet its plan.¹²

To meet the plans, management set productivity targets based upon these measures.

¹¹ www.systemsthinking.co.uk Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

¹² The Vanguard Guide to Understanding your Organisation as a System,
Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited

The trouble is the measures in use; budget, productivity, standards, activity and so on, don't reveal what is going on.

They are "rear view mirror" views of the organisation.¹²

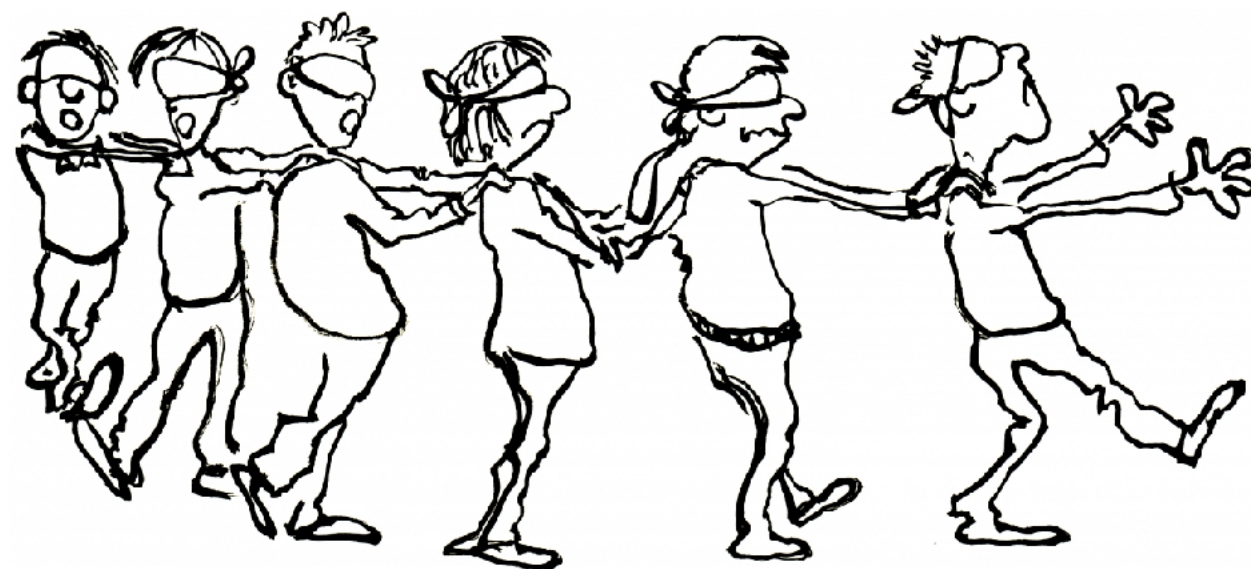


Image: Blind leading the blind, B&W illustration, Added Apr 19, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.
www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=NDQxMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeljxxYspjY

There is a focus on efficiency; working smarter not harder. There is a focus on cost; cheaper and faster.

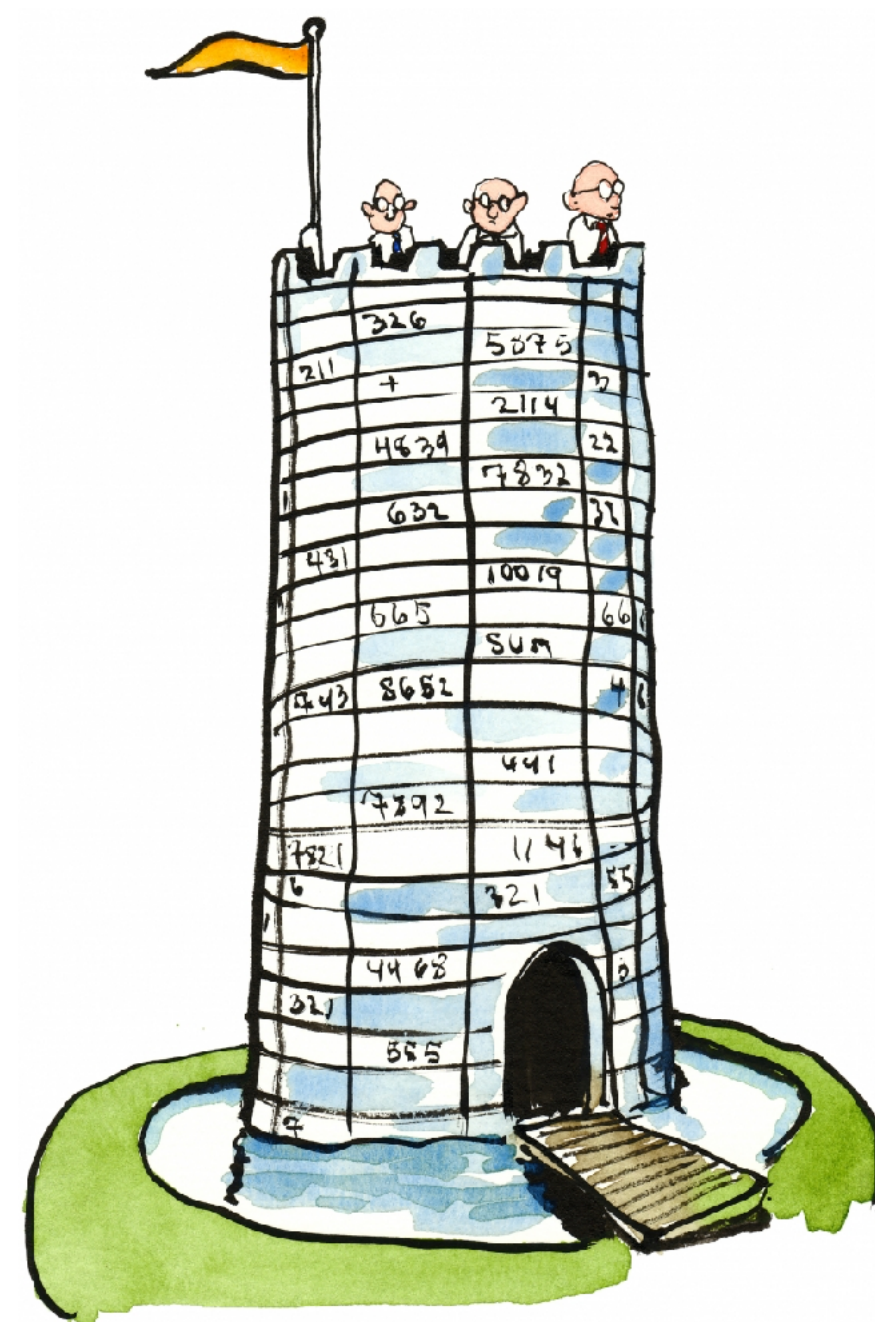
Maximise utilization is seen as a key lever; the more things we start, the more we finish. The belief is that if all resources aren't fully utilized on paper, then they won't be fully utilized in practice. Unless we keep them fully loaded, they will just be idlers goes the thinking.³

Some organisations employ efficiency experts, using time and motion studies to improve productivity.

Organisations employ standardisation, standard processes, standard times, benchmarking, best practices and frameworks, as methods to improve productivity.

There is a focus on consistency, with auditing and compliance ensuing.

Specialised roles are created, job descriptions are written, people are told to do their best.



Motivation is our desire as human beings to do things.

In today's organisations, it is assumed employees are motivated by external factors, what is called extrinsic motivation, such as monetary rewards and targets,¹⁷ or prizes, grades, pay for performance, sales commissions, incentive pay, and stock options.¹⁸

Another popular method is using management by numbers/objectives; quotas, zero defects, focus on hitting quarterly financial numbers, revenue targets.¹⁸

And finally competition; individual cost/profit centers, performance reviews, group competitions, individual group/rankings.¹⁸

¹⁸ Systems Thinking and the Three Musketeers - Deming's SoPK Part I, Eric Christiansen, 08/09/2011 www.processexcellencenetwork.com/methodologies-statistical-analysis-and-tools/columns/systems-thinking-and-the-three-musketeers/

People believe staff need to be ranked (bell curved) and rewarded. Motivation schemes need to be used, as do bonus schemes; payment by results. There is a belief carrot and stick motivation gets results.

This has become so prevalent in our working lives that we often no longer recognize them for what they are; management approaches designed upon a particular theory of human behaviour.¹⁶

Sadly, for work that requires even rudimentary cognitive skill these don't work.¹⁷

¹⁷ RSA Animate - Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us, Dan Pink

¹⁶ Motivation Intrinsic, engagement free, Howard Clark,
Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited
www.thesystemsthinkingreview.co.uk/index.php?pg=18&backto=1&utwkstoryid=352

Targets, bonuses, policies and procedures, one-to-ones, payment-by-results, and inspection, are all a product of the command and control logic.¹⁶

Each one of these tools is designed to push workers to work harder or to regulate their behaviour.¹⁶

Managers are taught, and believe, that their job is to manage people and manage budgets.¹¹ Managers assume people can make the difference.¹²

The traditional ethic is to manage the success of the business through managing budgets and staff at all levels.¹¹

Unfortunately, many organisations comprise unengaged employees.⁴

¹⁶ Motivation Intrinsic, engagement free, Howard Clark,
Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited
www.thesystemsthinkingreview.co.uk/index.php?pg=18&backto=1&utwkstoryid=352

⁴ Adaptive Leadership Accelerating Enterprise Agility - Jim Highsmith

According to a Towers Perrin Global Workforce study published in 2007-08, “Only one in five of the global workforce is fully engaged.” One in five isn’t enough to power a critical transformation.⁴



¹² The Vanguard Guide to Understanding your Organisation as a System,
Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited

¹¹ www.systemsthinking.co.uk Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

Image: **Stick and carrot**, gift set, illustration, Added: Apr 19, 2013, Copyright © 2013
HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved. www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MzM1ZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.UeMpThYspJY

Most companies strive to maximize shareholder wealth.²

In many organisations there is a finance department domination, with the CFO the most important person beyond the CEO.

There is a focus on cost reduction, a focus on driving down unit costs.

There are organisational financial controls, forecasting and planning activities, budgeting cycles, financial ratios, staff remuneration, customer financing, and franchise systems.

Corporate governance structures often exacerbate conflict by promoting the interests of some groups—like senior executives and the providers of capital - at the expense of others.²

Organisations look to utilise economies of scale, and work in batch, as a means of saving money.

Managers budget, they forecast; management by numbers, you will hear them say “I must meet my numbers!”

Management plan, creating 1, 2, and 5 year plans, resource plans, and project plans in Gantt charts. They believe that conformance to a plan is key, even though, long-range planning is of limited value.²

Bureaucratic theory and administrative theory are in use, as are organisational rules, organisational regulations, organisational policies and organisational procedures.

² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.

Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009. Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

Service guarantees, service standards, and their associated bureaucracies, are manifestations of a contractual attitude to customers.¹²

As John Seddon states:

“Today the organisation is often driven by SLAs with customers and suppliers.

Decision making is based upon meeting these agreements.

The supplier is responsible for the quality of their product or service.

This is impossible, because the customer is always involved in the service, or product the customer makes use of.

When a customer complains they are told the organisation met their contractual obligations.

¹¹ www.systemsthinking.co.uk Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

¹² The Vanguard Guide to Understanding your Organisation as a System, Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited

We expect our suppliers to improve their performance year on year. For example reduce costs, improve quality, improve on our supplier evaluation system.

This is usually manifest as a squeeze on suppliers; an attempt to reduce costs. In some cases it is no more than supplier abuse.”¹¹

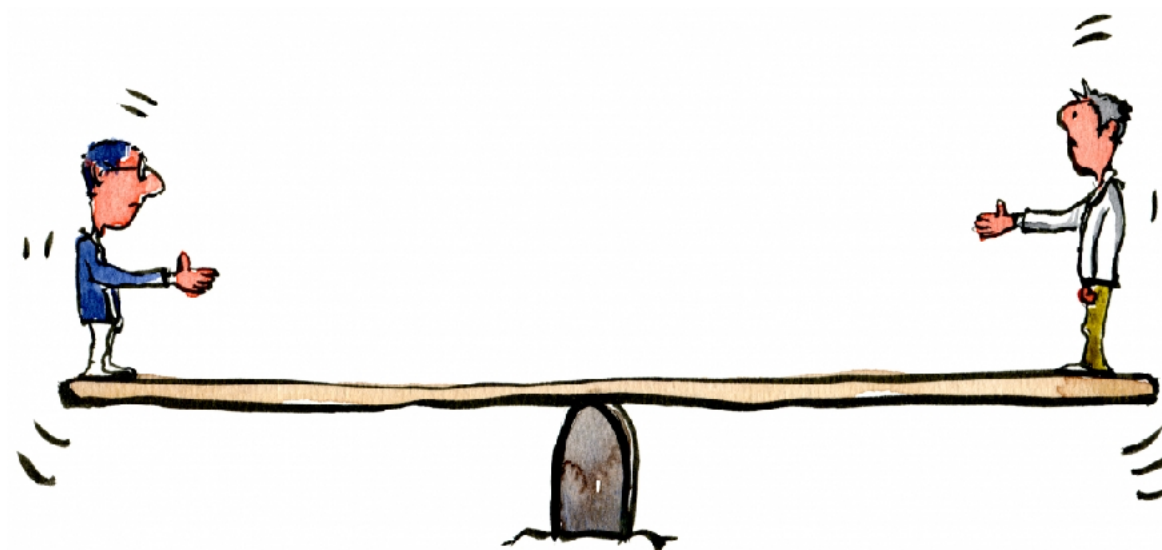


Image: Compromise - two men version, illustration, Added: Apr 19, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.

www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MjExMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UelazRYspJY

Up to now, you may be thinking that I have just stated the obvious, stated what you have experienced in organisations on how work is designed and managed.

But where did this theory of work; how we design and manage work, come from?

Through my research, what I have found interesting, is everything I have listed so far; the conventional theory of work, hasn't changed since their invention in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

AN OUTDATED THEORY OF WORK

Great innovations occurred in the past, but have since not been reinvented. In fact they appear to be remarkably impervious to change.

As Gary Hamel points out:

“Management is undoubtedly one of humankind's most important inventions.

Management was originally invented to solve two problems: the first getting semi-skilled employees to perform repetitive activities competently, diligently, and efficiently; the second coordinating those efforts in ways that enabled complex goods and services to be produced in large quantities.

In a nutshell, the problems were efficiency and scale, and the solution was bureaucracy, with its hierarchical structure, cascading goals, precise role definitions, and elaborate rules and procedures.

For more than a hundred years, advances in management; the structures, processes, and techniques used to compound human effort, have helped to power economic progress. ...²

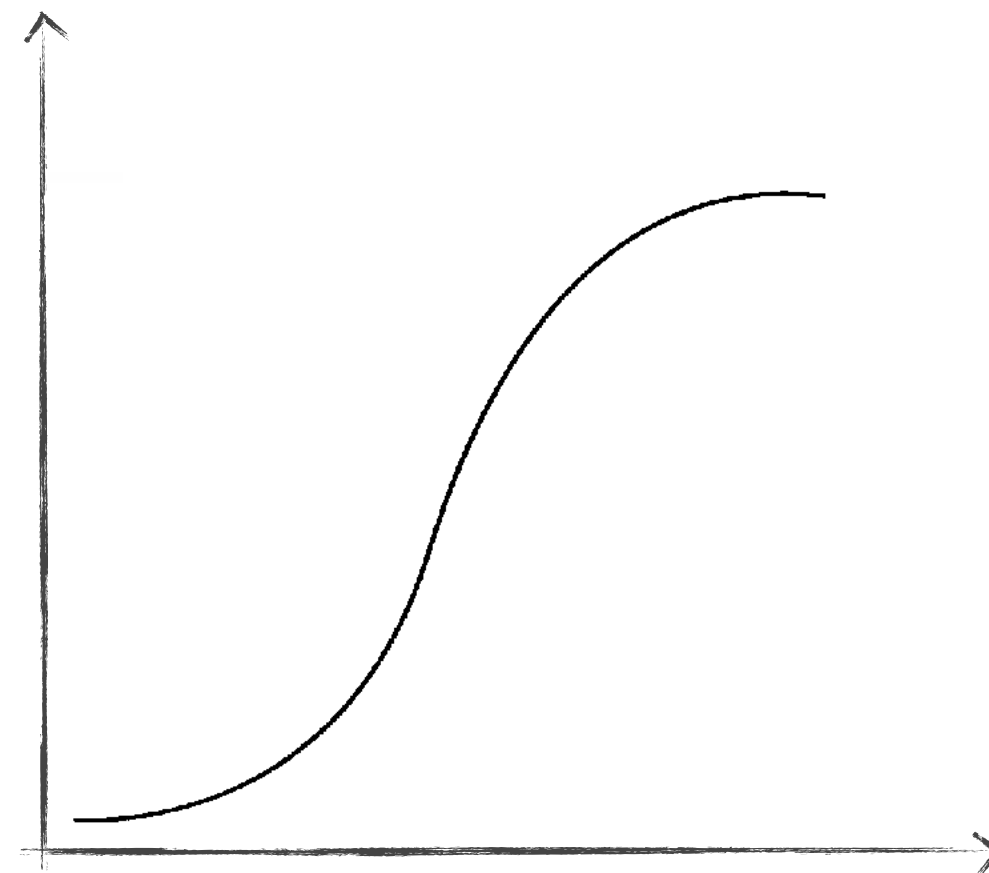
² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.

Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009. Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

However, the evolution of management has traced a classic S-curve.

After a fast start in the early twentieth century, the pace of innovation gradually decelerated and in recent years has slowed to a crawl.”²

A question we now have to ask is; why is that?



² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.

Through our organisations, government, and educational institutions, we have educated managers to think in ways that are suboptimal.¹⁰

Management, like the combustion engine, is a mature technology that must now be reinvented for a new age.²

This will not be easy. As Gary Hamel points out:

“Equipping organisations to tackle the future would require a management revolution no less momentous than the one that spawned modern industry.”²

Dr Gary Hamel



¹⁰ Fit for the Future, Vanguard Education, Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.

Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009. Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

For such a revolution to occur, executives and experts must first admit that they've reached the limits of [conventional] Management; the industrial age paradigm built atop the principles of standardization, specialization, hierarchy, control, and primacy of shareholder interests.²

They must face the fact that tomorrow's business imperatives lie outside the performance envelope of today's bureaucracy-infused management practices.²

John Galbraith eloquently points out our problem, and provides some insight into why these conventional theories are so impervious to change.

² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.
Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009. Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

“Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving there is no need to do so, almost everybody gets busy on the proof.”^{20 21}

John Kenneth Galbraith - Economist



²⁰ en.wikiquote.org/wiki/John_Kenneth_Galbraith
²¹ Economics, Peace and Laughter (1971), p. 50
Image: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:John_Kenneth_Galbraith_1944.jpg/

PANACEAS AND FADS

Panaceas that promise much, and purport to be the next big thing have arrived since the early design and management innovations.

The list of these panaceas is endless.

Each have had many followers, practitioners, dedicated conferences, supporting tools, experts, guides, coaches, facilitators, case studies describing successful implementations, papers and books.

They come and go, often ending up as fads; failing to achieve their intended outcomes⁶ and bowing out to the next panacea.

All the research and experience show that the latest panacea does no better than its predecessors.⁶

⁶ www.systemsthinking.co.uk/members/library/systems1.asp
Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited



Hamel offers an explanation:

“All too often, scholars have been content to codify best practice instead of looking beyond it.”²

Dr Gary Hamel



A group of scholars and business leaders assembled in May 2008 to lay out a roadmap for reinventing management.²

They were looking to answer two questions;

What is it about the way large organizations are managed, structured, and led that will most imperil their ability to thrive in the decades ahead?

What sorts of changes will be needed in management principles and practices to build companies that are truly fit for the future?²

² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.

Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009.

Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

Image: **Gary Hamel**, www.managementexchange.com/sites/default/files/features/hamel-headshot.jpg

The results of their discussions were published Gary Hamel, in the February 09 issue of the Harvard Business Review article entitled “Moon Shots for Management”.

25 moon shots were created, with general agreement that the first 10 are the most critical.²



² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review. Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009. Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

1. Ensure that the work of management serves a higher purpose
2. Fully embed the ideas of community and citizenship in management systems
3. Reconstruct management's philosophical foundations
4. Eliminate the pathologies of formal hierarchy
5. Reduce fear and increase trust
6. Reinvent the means of control

1. Redefine the work of leadership
2. Expand and exploit diversity
3. Reinvent strategy making as an emergent process
4. De-structure and disaggregate the organization²

² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.

Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009. Copyright

© 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

In my view, the eleventh moon shot is also critical; “Dramatically reduce the pull of the past” where, existing management systems often mindlessly reinforce the status quo.²

The fact that there are so many panaceas, points to a perceived need to change, yet change, sustainable change, rarely happens.

Over and over again improvements are thwarted by commonly-known but illusive forces.⁶

As Chris Argyris suggested in 2010:

We must now ask some hard questions.

Given all the advice from literally hundreds of books and thousands of articles that have appeared over the past decades have we witnessed a flowering of new forms of human potential?

Have we been astounded by new levels of organizational performance and creativity?

Is the world healing through international learning and cooperation?

Anyone familiar with recent history knows the disappointing, even sad, answers to these questions.”⁹

⁶ www.systemsthinking.co.uk/members/library/systems1.asp
Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

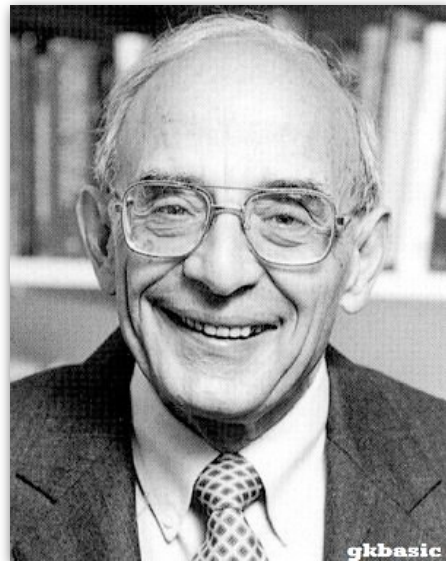
² Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.
Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009.
Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

⁹ By permission of Oxford University Press www.oup.com
© Organizational Traps: Leadership, Culture, Organizational Design by Chris Argyris
(2010) 478w from Chp.6 “Strengthening New Approaches” pp.195-197

“The world continues apace and we make incremental technological improvements here and there - but on the big questions we move not an inch.

We are stuck. In fact, we are trapped. ⁹”

Chris Argyris Professor Emeritus
Harvard Business School



TRAPS

Argyris goes onto explain the power, ubiquity, and unintended consequences of being trapped:

“Much of the future progress on leadership culture and organizational design is inhibited by Traps.

Practitioners are aware of these limits. Unfortunately they appear to bypass them.

This is also true with scholars.

Both groups appear to be unaware that the consequence of their respective bypass strengthens Traps.

There is a puzzle embedded in the list of “moon shots”. On the one hand, the list makes good sense. Implementing these recommendations successfully would go a long way to achieving the objectives of the conference. ... ⁹

⁹ By permission of Oxford University Press www.oup.com

© Organizational Traps: Leadership, Culture, Organizational Design by Chris Argyris
(2010) 478w from Chp.6 “Strengthening New Approaches” pp.195-197

On the other hand, I suggest that the moon shots the conference-goers came up with are not news to many practitioners and researchers who attend university or company executive programs or those who keep up to date with the current literature.

Knowledgeable people have been calling for these reforms and others for at least three decades.

Yet here we have these recommendations from a recent conference of prestigious executives, consultants, venture capitalists— presented as if many of their peers had not been working assiduously on achieving these results for years.

How can this be?

Why did the conference organizers not direct the energy and attention of researchers and executives to begin to change the status quo so that these moon shots could be achieved?

One reason why the participants at this prestigious conference could present these recommended moon shots with such unselfconsciousness could be our collective decision to treat our inability to actually achieve these results as undiscussable.

We have collectively decided to rule discussion of the power and ubiquity of Traps off limits.

It may be unfair to call them naïve, yet we must point out that those who overlook the power and ubiquity of Traps will find their prescriptions for change continuously undermined.

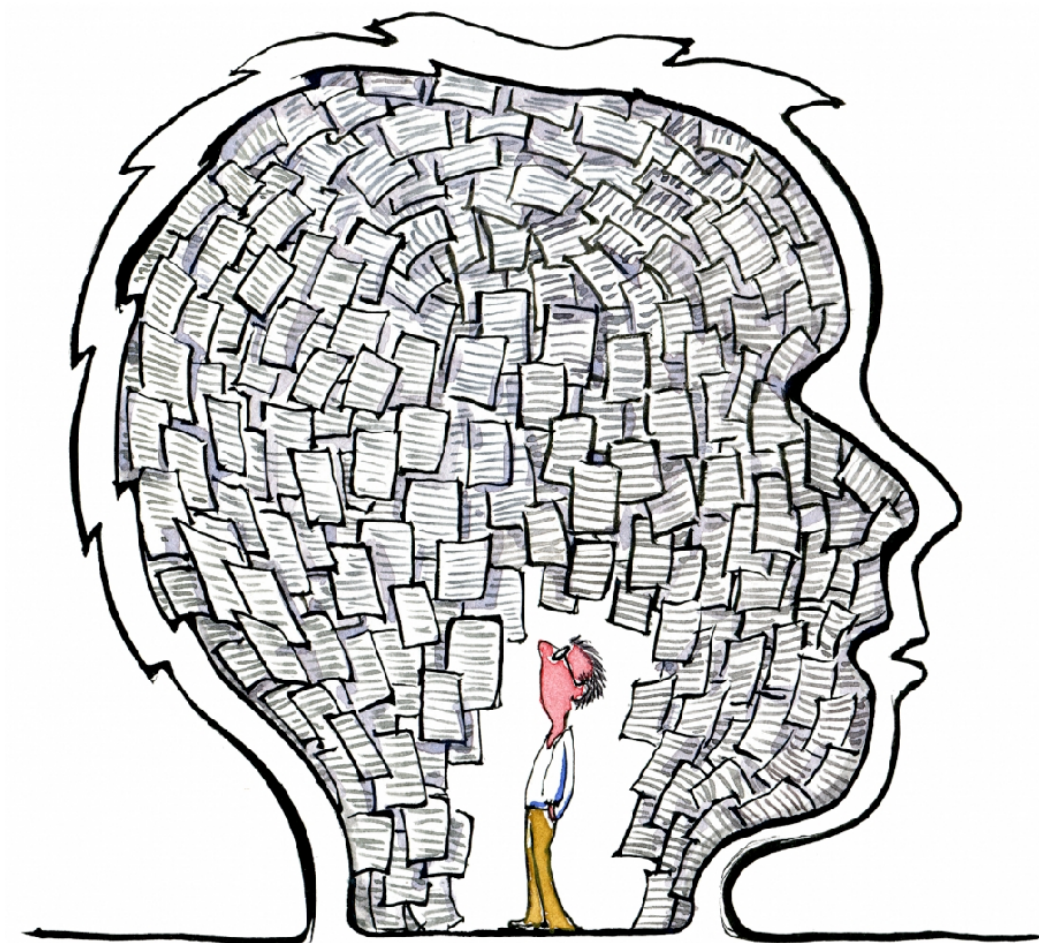
Ruling the discussion of Traps off limits makes learning in any deep sense about ourselves, our organizations, and our society almost impossible - and so protects the status quo even when we all recognize that change is needed and urgent. ... ⁹

⁹ By permission of Oxford University Press www.oup.com

A great deal of the theory and practice of organizational research over the past few decades has been unable to change this situation.”⁹

Argyris's theory is that organisational Traps are of our own making; being trapped by our own behaviour manifested from our beliefs.

In addition to this view, it is my view that firstly, our lack of knowledge of where our theories in use for designing and managing work originate, and secondly, that these theories were invented to solve different problems for a different age, both hinder our ability to recognise that we are trapped and hinder us from perceiving a need for change.



⁹ By permission of Oxford University Press www.oup.com

THE WESTERN MANAGEMENT TRAP

Most management theories have developed in the United States by Americans.¹⁹

In the years following the Second World War, the United States dominated the global business world completely – it was the major source of capital, the home of advanced manufacturing, and the source of most major technological developments.⁷

It provided the best quality management education, and it was the source of all the latest management thinking.⁷

As a result, American theories of work i.e. the basic frameworks and assumptions we use to talk about the practice and profession of management; our underlying beliefs about what management is trying to achieve; and

¹⁹ From Adler. International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior, 5E. © 2008 South-Western, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reproduced by permission. www.cengage.com/permissions

how it goes about achieving it⁷, derived from their European roots, are now dominant.

This management ideology, endures primarily because there is no viable alternative. Consider a few basic facts.

At London Business School, one of the top business schools outside North America, more than 90 per cent of the faculty gained their PhDs in North America. The same is essentially true at Insead (France), IESE (Barcelona), the Indian School of Business (Hyderabad), and CEIBS (Shanghai).⁷

⁷ Management ideology: The last bastion of American hegemony, Julian Birkinshaw, Management 2.0 Labnotes Issue 21 January 2012

“The entire business world is seemingly in thrall to the dominant American ideology of management. America may have lost its lead in other areas of business, but it still holds sway in this one, vital area.”⁷

Julian Birkinshaw Professor of Strategic and International Management, London Business School



The top management journals, from Fortune to Harvard Business Review to Administrative Science Quarterly, are all based in North America.

The top management consultancies, from McKinsey to BCG, Bain and Booz & Co., all have deep American roots.⁷

Rather than being applicable worldwide, many traditional models effectively guide thinking and action only within the American context within which they were developed.¹⁹

⁷ Management ideology: The last bastion of American hegemony, Julian Birkinshaw, Management 2.0 Labnotes Issue 21 January 2012

¹⁹ From Adler. International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior, 5E. © 2008 South-Western, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reproduced by permission. www.cengage.com/permissions

Image: reinventingmanagement.com/files/birkinshaw.jpg

Most motivation theories in use today were developed in the United States by Americans and about Americans.¹⁹

Unfortunately, many Americans as well as managers from other countries have treated American theories as the best or only way to understand motivation. They are neither.⁹

American motivation theories - too often assumed to reflect universal values - have failed to provide consistently useful explanations for behavior outside the United States. Managers must therefore guard against imposing domestic American management theories on their global business practices.¹⁹

¹⁹ From Adler. International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior, 5E. © 2008 South-Western, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reproduced by permission. www.cengage.com/permissions

⁷ Management ideology: The last bastion of American hegemony, Julian Birkinshaw, Management 2.0 Labnotes Issue 21 January 2012

We continue to see the principles of shareholder capitalism, professional bureaucracy and productive efficiency as natural, inevitable and beneficial. But they can - and should - be challenged.⁷

Everyone can see that the balance of power in the business world is shifting to the East. We now look to Asia as a source of finance, for advanced manufacturing, for technological innovation and for well-educated workers.⁷

Is it likely that we will in future look to Asia as a source of management ideology?⁷

THE PROBLEM TO SOLVE

But why change? Surely it all, well, just works doesn't it?

Studies have shown that half a century ago, the life expectancy of a firm in the Fortune 500 was around 75 years. Now it's less than 15 years and declining even further.⁸

As time has progressed, scientific studies have shown that the impact of command and control is detrimental to both workers and the performance of organisations.¹⁶

In my view, to move beyond theories originating in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to avoid the next panacea, and to escape Argyris's Traps, we need to understand the roots of the current theory of work, and then reflect why it is so impervious to change.

⁸ www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2011/11/19/peggy-noonan-on-steve-jobs-and-why-big-companies-die/

My hypothesis is, that the starting point is understanding the theories in use by those that design and manage, organisations, leading to curiosity, leading to change.

Why? I will leave it to Deming who has the final word in this introduction...

**“It's not necessary to change.
Survival is not mandatory.”²²**

Dr. W. Edwards Deming



²² www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/w/w_edwards_deming.html

¹⁶ Motivation Intrinsic, engagement free, Howard Clark,
Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited
www.thesystemsthinkingreview.co.uk/index.php?pg=18&backto=1&utwkstoryid=352

Image: Russian Deming Institute deming.ru/AboutDeming/foto_pages/Deming_BW1.jpg

I dedicate this e-book to my children, Kaylah and Aiden, in the hope that they will come to live and work in an age where they are free of the shackles of the past.

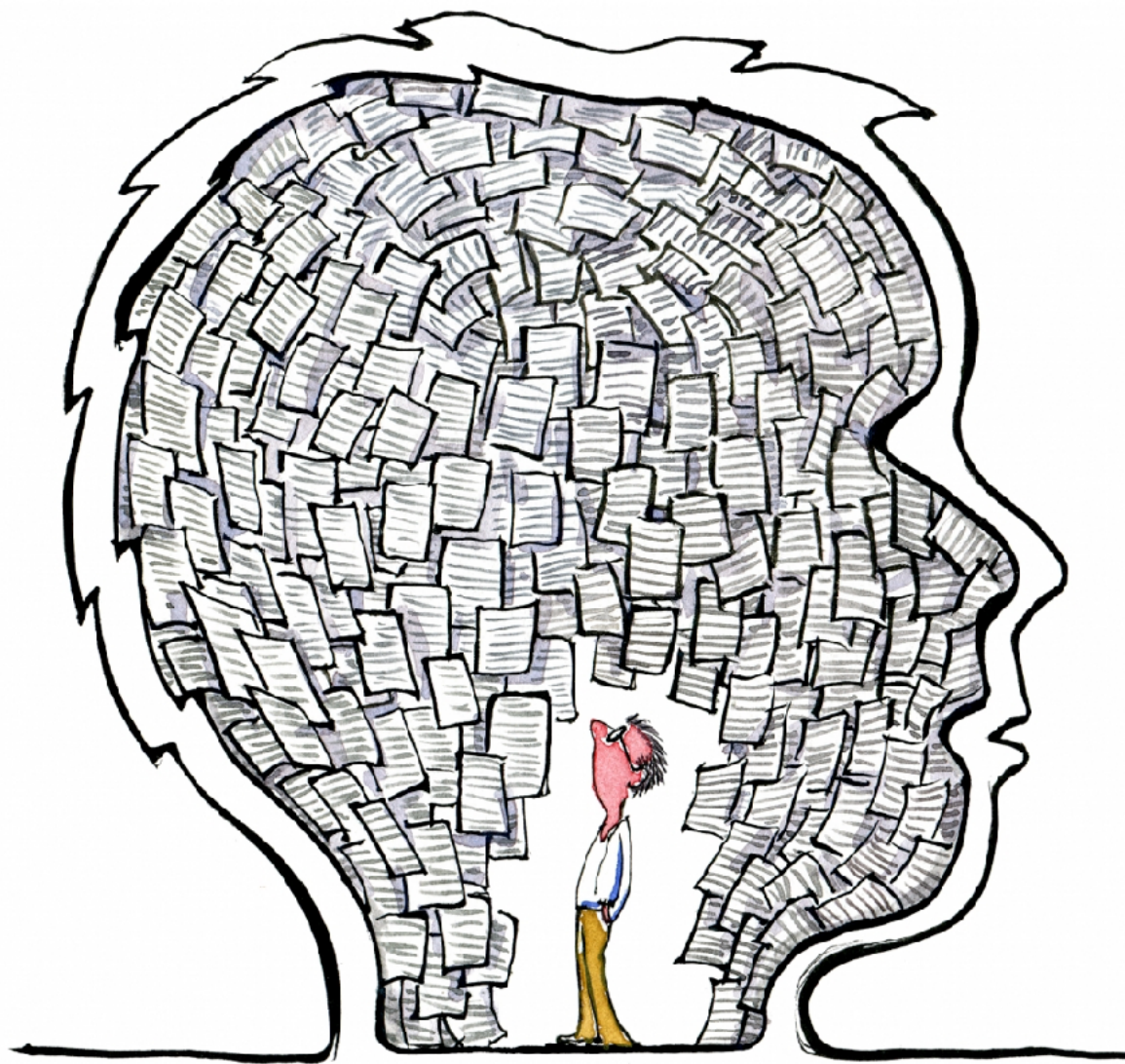
My thanks go to the many authors, academics, scholars, publishers, institutes, illustrators and individuals who have kindly let me reference their work free of charge. There are too many to list here, but you will see each of their names, and their works, in the bibliography section.

David Joyce



In our next chapter we will start to discuss the origins of the design and management of work, starting with its early beginnings.

Theories of Work: Origins of the Design and Management of Work



By David Joyce

— Bibliography —

- 1 The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference, Malcolm Gladwell, Little Brown, 2000
- 2 Excerpt from Moon Shots for Management by Gary Hamel, issue February 2009.
Copyright © 2009 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review.
- 3 Leffingwell, Dean, "Agile Software Requirements", Addison-Wesley, 2011.
- 4 Highsmith, Jim, Adaptive Leadership Accelerating Enterprise Agility
- 5 Systems thinking, lean production and action learning, John Seddon, Simon Caulkin, Action Learning: Research and Practice, Volume 4, Issue 1, 2007
- 6 www.systemsthinking.co.uk/members/library/systems1.asp Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited
- 7 Management ideology: The last bastion of American hegemony, Julian Birkinshaw, Management 2.0 Labnotes Issue 21 January 2012

- 8 www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2011/11/19/peggy-noonan-on-steve-jobs-and-why-big-companies-die/
- 9 © Organizational Traps: Leadership, Culture, Organizational Design by Chris Argyris (2010) 478w from Chp.6 "Strengthening New Approaches" pp.195-197 By permission of Oxford University Press www.oup.com
- 10 Fit for the Future, Vanguard Education, Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited
- 11 www.systemsthinking.co.uk
Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited
- 12 The Vanguard Guide to Understanding your Organisation as a System, Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited
- 13 5 Mistakes Contact Center Managers Make, Tripp Babbitt www.customermanagementiq.com/operations/articles/5-mistakes-contact-center-managers-make/
- 14 Vanguard Guide to Process Mapping, Copyright © 2001, Vanguard Consulting Limited

- 15 Dew J, Root cause analysis: The seven deadly sins of quality management. quality Progress. 36(9): September 2003.
- 16 Motivation Intrinsic, engagement free, Howard Clark, Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited www.thesystemsthinkingreview.co.uk/index.php?pg=18&backto=1&utwkstoryid=352
- 17 RSA Animate - Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us, Dan Pink
- 18 Systems Thinking and the Three Musketeers - Deming's SoPK Part I, Eric Christiansen, 08/09/2011 www.processexcellencenetwork.com/methodologies-statistical-analysis-and-tools/columns/systems-thinking-and-the-three-musketeers/
- 19 From Adler. *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior*, 5E. © 2008 South-Western, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reproduced by permission. www.cengage.com/permissions
- 20 en.wikiquote.org/wiki/John_Kenneth_Galbraith
- 21 The New York Times Magazine (1970-06-07)
- 22 www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/w/w_edwards_deming.html
- 23 540-A brief history of Western management thought, Copyright © Vanguard Consulting Limited

John Seddon, Provided by Charlotte Pell, Vanguard

Dr Gary Hamel, managementexchange.com/sites/default/files/features/hamel-headshot.jpg

John Kenneth Galbraith, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:John_Kenneth_Galbraith_1944.jpg/

Chris Argyris, gkbasic.com/public-administration/chris-argyris/

Dr. W Edwards Deming, Russian Deming Institute
deming.ru/AboutDeming/foto_pages/Deming_BW1.jpg

Julian Birkinshaw, reinventingmanagement.com/files/birkinshaw.jpg

Taylor, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:F._Taylor_at_1873.jpg PD-US

New machine shop at **Midvale Steel** Company seen from the gallery, ca. 1887, Midvale Company Photographs (1883 - 1953), Kheel Center, Cornell University

Timing Workers, Production Company: Presented by James S. Perkins in collaboration with Dr. Lillian M. Gilbreth & Dr. Ralph M. Barnes
www.archive.org/details/OriginalFilm_2 This movie is part of the collection: Prelinger Archives, Creative Commons license: Public Domain

Work Roles, www.managementstudyguide.com/images/functional_foreman.jpg

Stick and carrot, gift set, illustration, Added: Apr 19, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.
www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MzM1ZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.UeMpThYspJY

Compromise - two men version, illustration, Added: Apr 17, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.
www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MjExMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeIazRYspJY

Good life, car, color illustration, Added: Apr 3, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.
www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=NTYxMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeIjchYspJY

Blocks illustration, Added: May 21, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.
www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=NTIzMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeInSxYspJY

Working in the tower, Black and white illustration, Added: Mar 30, 2013 Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.
www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=ODk5ZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.UeIj-xYspJY

Blind leading the blind, B&W illustration, Added Apr 19, 2013, B&W illustration, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.

[www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?
mediaID=NDQxMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeIjxxYspJY](http://www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=NDQxMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeIjxxYspJY)

Restless type, Description: Ambition and results, Added: Feb 13, 2013, Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.

[www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?
mediaID=MjllODkwZGI1NWZm#.UeIXqBYspJY](http://www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MjllODkwZGI1NWZm#.UeIXqBYspJY)

Vision and reality, Added Feb 14, 2013 Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.

[www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=
MTgyZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.UeJFRxYspJY](http://www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MTgyZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.UeJFRxYspJY)

On the High Chair, Added Feb 13, 2013 Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.

[www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=
MDExZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.UeI8cRYspJY](http://www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=MDExZTg5MGRiNTVmZg==#.UeI8cRYspJY)

Spreadsheet experts in the tower, Added Feb 13, 2013 Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved.

[www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?
mediaID=ODRlODkwZGI1NWZm#.UeI_ShYspJY](http://www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=ODRlODkwZGI1NWZm#.UeI_ShYspJY)

Man in a head, Frits Ahlefeldt, Added: Apr 3, 2013, color illustration Copyright © 2013 HikingArtist, All Rights Reserved. www.hikingartist.net

[www.hikingartist.net/
media.details.php?mediaID=
ODMwMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeMk8hYspJY](http://www.hikingartist.net/media.details.php?mediaID=ODMwMWU4OTBkYjU1ZmY=#.UeMk8hYspJY)

INDEX OF NAMES

W. Edwards Deming
Malcolm Gladwell
John Seddon
Ira Shor
Gary Hamel
John Galbraith
Chris Argyris
Julian Birkinshaw
David Joyce

THEORIES OF WORK:
ORIGINS OF THE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT OF WORK