

Editorial

SAIMAS celebrated its 50th anniversary on 10 August 2010. It was a grand affair. The council invited some of the founding members of SAIOM, which changed to SAIMAS in 1994. Past and present members had a lovely evening chatting about old times and the future of SAIMAS. Marcel Wilson, from the DPSA was one of the guests at our table and one of the burning issues for SAIMAS will be to revitalise the old skill of business process mapping and the role which training institutions will need to take to assist in this endeavour, of getting personnel up to speed on business process mapping. See the feature and photos.

As indicated in the previous journal, this is a special edition. We dug through the old archives and discovered that all my predecessors (editors) had the same problem- no input from readers, difficult to get articles etc. etc. But even so there are a number of articles worthwhile to reprint! The problem was; what to choose and what to leave? If we published all the articles we had scanned, then it will take everyone a year to consume all the information and the SAIMAS journal budget will be zero and the treasurer will fire me! (The "we" I am referring to is Adele Jacobz and myself, who assisted me with the scanning of articles and finding historical timelines). Therefore it was decided that in the following issues we will continue to print back dated articles which are still relevant today.

One of the first articles we came across was about change management "LETTING THE GRAPEVINE TAKE OVER". In 1994 when workstudy came under fire for being too "Tayloristic" we were asked what the difference was between works study and organisational development. We were obviously annoyed because any good work study officer will tell you it is one and the same thing and that you always consider the person doing the job and that organisations do not consist of blocks and that without people you will not have an organisation. So you will gather, as you read through these articles, that this has been an age old argument and it is nothing new! Something else you will notice is the fact that the authors often refer to the O&M man (as women, have always been in the minority in the work study profession). However we have managed to change history, Ria Loubser became the first women Vice and Executive President and to celebrate women's month, the first women to win the Executive Presidents Award for Excellence! (But, just so you know, I am the first women editor since 2004.)

We hereby acknowledge and give credit to the past authors (many still present and counting) for their contribution to the SAIOM and SAIMAS journal, whose articles we have selected to reprint.

1960-1969

The 60's have been described by historians as the ten years having the most significant changes in history. By the end of the 60's humanity had entered the space age by putting a man on the moon. The 60's were influenced by the youth of the post-war baby boom - a generation with a fondness for change and far-out gadgets.

- 1961 JFK sets goal of putting a man on Moon before the end of decade
- 1961 Union of South Africa becomes a republic, leaves Commonwealth
- 1962 The audio cassette invented.
- 1962 Space war, the first computer video game invented.
- 1962 The communications satellite Telstar, developed by Bell Labs, was launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida, beaming live television from Europe to the United States.
- 1962 Martin Luther King Jnr "I have a dream speech" at Lincoln Memorial
- 1963The video disk invented.
- 1963 1st flight of Boeing 727 jet.
- 1964 Acrylic paint invented.
- 1964 Dr Martin Luther King Jnr awarded Nobel Peace Prize
- 1964 BASIC (an early computer language) is invented by John George Kemeny and Tom Kurtz.
- 1964 The 1st nuclear-powered lighthouse began operations in the Chesapeake Bay.
- 1965 Sony Corp introduced its home video tape recorder, priced at \$995
- 1965 Big Bang theory of creation of universe is supported by announcement of discovery of new celestial bodies know as blue galaxies
- 1965 RC Duncan patented "Pampers," a disposable nappy.
- 1966 Texas Instruments introduced its 1st hand-held calculator based on the integrated circuit developed by Jack Kilby in 1958.
- 1966 Hewlett-Packard introduced its first computer, the HP 2116A.
- 1967 DNA created in a test tube
- 1968 The computer mouse invented by Douglas Engelbart.
- 1968 The first computer with integrated circuits made.
- 1968 Robert Dennard invented RAM (random access memory).
- 1969 1st men on Moon, Neil Armstrong & Edwin Aldrin, in Apollo 11
- 1969 Neil Armstrong steps on Moon at 2:56:15 AM (GMT)
- 1969The arpanet (first internet) invented.
- 1969 The artificial heart invented.
- 1969 The ATM invented.
- 1969 The bar-code scanner is invented.
- 1969 Feb 9, World's largest airplane, Boeing 747, made its 1st commercial flight.

LETTING THE GRAPEVINE TAKE OVER April 1969 Vol. 7. No.2

If you are the manager of a good -size department, you are probably being talked about right now. Your policies are being reviewed. Your objectives are being questioned. Your record is being heartlessly scrutinized. Your future is being estimated and to some extent influenced. All of this by people who don't have half the facts- your employees. What is worse, you can't stop them. In spite of the fact that you play a large part in their livelihood from nine to five, they did not sacrifice their freedom of speech to work for you.

You aren't alone on their agenda, however; their list is a big one. It deals with everything that has to do with them, that may have to do with them or that they think may have to do with them.

They are people. And people are emotional, often insecure and anxious to be reassured. They want to know because knowing dispels fear. They are talking now because if they aren't sure of the real facts, they will make up their own and try their best to believe them. After all, haven't you and I done the same thing? How often have we clung to fictitious facts and ideas simply because there weren't enough real ones?

Because of these basic human emotions, the grapevine becomes an every day and night part of our business. It can be a medium for good or evil. Take a look at some of its characteristics.

It cannot be eliminated or suppressed. You can't "fire" it. If it is held down in one place, it pops out in another. It exists under both good and bad managers.

- It is fast, often faster than formal communication.
- It is influential. It can make or break an employee, undermine a manager, or decrease morale.
- It is often incorrect. It is difficult for the participants in the grapevine to distinguish fact from myth or distorted information.
- You can't hold it responsible for its "mistakes."
- It can be useful where formal communication is inappropriate.
- It is not shown on the company organization chart.
- It can bypass managers in the chain of command without difficulty because it is not confined by formal procedures.

The most important grapevine characteristic is that the manager cannot suppress or abolish it. He cannot chop down the grapevine. Never was there a better place for the old adage: "If you can't beat 'em join 'em."

An unfortunate tendency among the majority of managers is to be impatient with grapevine rumours. They are equally impatient with people they know are involved in the grapevine. They fail to realize that the manager has probably done more to generate the rumours than the participants. How? By doing less; less formal communicating, than he should have. His people simply seek to fill the void.

Example: A group of lower-level white collar workers in a large sales office were complaining. They were embittered by the conflicts and confusion generated by the testing of a new accounting system. Each had been affected by having his routine changed. As is usual with installations of new systems, individual jobs were not yet well coordinated. It was easy for an outsider to observe that resulting mistakes and lack of efficiency during the changeover seemed to threaten each individual's efficiency record — and his job. The subconscious tendency of each person involved was to defend his position by criticizing the system.

It shouldn't take much thought to understand that the core of the problem was insecurity. Regular assurance through planned communication would have dispelled insecurity.

When a top sales manager heard of the resistance, he showed a great deal of irritation. He complained at length about the employee's lack of patience with new ideas. He even questioned the possibility of progress with people who fought progress at every step. He coined a phrase, "Resistance to change is the greatest threat to industrial progress."

This same manager had recently been angry with one of his division managers for blaming his employees for reports being late. He took the sensible stand that the division manager was accountable for reports being on time and should never offer the excuse to top management that one of his employees was at fault.

The top man was reminded of this and asked if the same thinking shouldn't be applied to installing new systems. He was reminded that people are not informed unless they feel informed, and that only management can inform them. He countered with, "But we told them!" And he had. A brief communication to the department heads (and that's where it stopped), explained that experimentation with new systems was going on and that their cooperation would be appreciated.

Communication is a big topic among managers — a topic for talk. They all say what they want in their organization is better communication. The top manager wants his other managers trained in communication. The other managers complain that what the top man needs is knowledge of communication. The word communication is used to indicate some ethereal panacea for all ills. A manager suspects that something are there that makes things easier, but they rarely know what it is and what it is for, and almost never know how to use it.

The simple fact is that communication really isn't difficult. Any grammar school graduate can understand its simple definition: Communication is the passing of information and understanding from one person to another. Information by itself is not communication. The waste of data and talk and the time spent in industry in passing information which is not understood, and therefore worthless, is beyond conception. One psychological survey estimated that less than 40% of verbal and written information in industry was understood.

There are only two purposes of communication — the first is to provide information and understanding for efficient job performance. The second is to provide mutual understanding and engender loyalty necessary for willing cooperation and job satisfaction.

It has been said that production can be expected in direct proportion to communication efficiency.

To make the job even simpler, the manager has only three ways to communicate — by words, pictures and action.

Research shows that the manager communicates and receives communication by means of written or spoken words more than by any other means. "Proper" use of words means the ability to get over to others what you mean in words. The manager must get through to others and let them get through to him. Managers at higher levels need to understand the hopes, fears, ambitions and sentiments of those below and to respond to them in conferences, statements of policy, and face-to-face conversation. For example; A grievance about a raise is personal and involved feeling. To answer it solely in the cold, logical, factual jargon of the accountant is to leave it unanswered because the aggrieved person will not understand it.

The higher a manager climbs the management ladder, the more his success depends upon words. He is more removed from the area of action and has to depend on reports, conferences, meetings and written statements to accomplish his job.

Pictures are a second means of communication. Pictures include charts, blueprints, models, and other visual devices that are not organized into words. Pictures can show the relationships of an intricate, complicated mass of data, as in a blueprint or a chart. They can simplify the use of words or lend life to them, as in colour charts. Furthermore, they can portray aesthetic values and conditions for which words are somewhat inadequate.

Management today tends to express more of its ideas in pictures such as films, charts, and scale models of buildings and machinery. Although pictures are impressive, they are seldom used alone. They are, as the term implies, visual aids, and are most effective when used with well-chosen words and action to tell the complete story.

The third classification of communication is action. What a person does is a means of communication when it affects others. A handshake has meaning. A pat on the back has meaning. A raise in the pay envelope has meaning. Failure to act also has meaning, as in the failure to compliment a person for a job well done.

There is one significant fact about action as a means of communication. That fact is that people "believe" action more than they do words or pictures. If there is a difference between what a manager says and does, people will, in the long run, believe what he does. For example, for a while a manager may sell his personnel on the idea that he has their interest at heart; but if his actions prove otherwise, he cannot keep them sold.

One of the biggest flaws in managerial communication is the failure to keep those who will be affected informed of planned managerial action. Take the true story of a proposed company move:

The fact that the company was going to move was generally known and acknowledged by management. At first, speculation on when and where the company might move was stimulating to the employees. But after a while, when no further information came from management, fear took over. Who would go, who wouldn't? Who would get promoted, who would get demoted? What would the new climate be like? Alaska or California? Some employees fearing the worst found positions in other companies.

Only when the loss in personnel became significant did management realize that something had to be done. As a result not only were the employees "filled in" completely about the move, but the company sought outside managerial help. A complete system for keeping all the employees informed about all the company's activities and policies pertaining to them were instituted. The new system also provided that the company's executives are kept posted, wherever possible, on all problems of employees.

To help stave off an emergency all the facts related to the move were detailed. They were put on bulletin boards, talked about at meetings attended at one time or another by all employees.

The president carefully explained the advantages of the move, the solutions to the problems the move created, and the plans for keeping the company productive during the transition period with no halt in wages.

In detailed letters sent to the homes of all employees, he also explained how each household would be moved, with the family's belongings fully insured. He spoke of the special personnel teams already in action in the new location. They were working with established real estate firms on housing problems, with school committees and other civic organizations, paving the way for the employees and their families to be resettled with all possible ease.

The relocation was accomplished with minimum strain and almost no loss of employees. It was successful.

The company is now becoming well known in its new site and a big part of its success is due, not to the amount of money spent on its new facilities, but to the excellent relationships within the company.

The consultants who helped this firm out of its predicament didn't perform any miracle. They replaced the haphazard with the systematic. They spelled out the essential and fundamental principles of intra-company communication, then after the company adopted these principles, persuaded its managers to continue using them. Most important was the establishment of procedures for determining which groups would be given particular information — and when.

The development of a regular and dependable communication system withers the grapevine by providing true sources of information. It helps weaken the role of office politics and petty jealousies by keeping employees informed regarding company decisions and policies. The over-all result is a truly coordinated company.

You may say the story of the move was strictly a presidential problem. It wouldn't apply to department heads. Put yourself in the place of a department head in this company during the confusion stage. You could have helped considerably by keeping in close touch with the rumours spread by your personnel. You could have assisted in dispelling those that were not based on fact. You could have assured staff that such a move was complicated, and that as soon as it was settled they would know about it. This would not have solved all the problems. But it would have helped.

There are many things any managers at any level can do to improve formal employee communications. Here are some of them:

1. Get yourself informed when possible.

If your personnel cannot except answers from you, where can they go? If you can't tell them, try to find out — but admit at once that you don't know. Try to understand thoroughly before communicating. They'll depend on you more.

2. Develop the Aggressive Willingness to Communicate.

A positive attitude is a basic part of the foundation for good communication. The effective manager tries to give his employees all the information they think they need. They must feel informed.

3. Establish a reputation for sincerity and truthfulness.

Communication is built upon a foundation of confidence. Confidence is especially important in communication downward to workers because of their natural tendency to wonder whether they are getting the whole story, and to doubt management's motives.

4. Keep employees informed of managerial action which will affect them.

No plan of action is complete until its plan of communication has been made. The important point here is that communication comes before action, not after. A person dislikes learning about a change after it has happened. He feels that he does not count as an individual.

5. Get the Grapevine on your side.

As shown earlier, the grapevine is a powerful influence for good or evil in an organization. Which influence it is, depends upon the manager. If he has the support of the informal organization, if he is a reliable source of information, and if he shows a genuine interest in communication, the grapevine will probably support him.

6. Establish communication procedures.

Procedure is a way of doing something. When that way is established, less conscious effort is required to direct it, and participants feel more secure. For example, if a procedure is established by which letters from the head office covering certain subjects are circulated among all area managers, then they will have less anxiety about whether they are "in the know" and they will spend less time cultivating the grapevine.

Work should be the basis for organizing a company and any part of the company. If this principle is not followed then the permanence and stability of the organization becomes dependent on people. This can be harmful for two reasons.

1. People do not last forever.

2. You can't upgrade men successfully if you have to train them in the image of their predecessors.

No two people are exactly alike in skills and abilities. However, if the work has been well defined, those people with adequate capabilities may be found and developed to do it. Rational allocation of work is the basis of good organization.

Here are some symptoms of "the mistake": Derelict Employees — the old timer around the place that is almost non-productive. You don't want to fire him for morale's sake, and there does not seem to be much you can do with him.

Confusion — Constant misunderstanding, people not sure of assignments, doubtful of the limits of their responsibility, authority, accountability.

Excessive Politics — people working more to gain favour than to carry out responsibilities, after working to make another employee look bad in the eyes of superiors.

Overlap of Activities — Lines of responsibility not clearly established. No one sure just who's supposed to do what. Friction to the right, friction to the left, high cost in the middle.

Over hiring — a college education hired to do the job that doesn't need it. Emphasis placed on experience and background at a sacrifice of character. Paying more than is required for carrying out routine jobs.

Low Morale — all of the above symptoms lead to poor morale and lack of company spirit. The manager who constantly blames his personnel for lack of production will suffer poor morale. Before blaming anyone, he should ask himself if the job with all its facets is as clear to the Employee as it is to him.

Ask yourself the following questions (if you can answer yes to all of them, don't bother to read further)

1. Does each member of your personnel know exactly what his responsibility and authority is?
2. Does everyone know the responsibilities and authority of the job below him and above him?
3. Does each man know what he has to learn in order to advance?
4. Where possible, has every manager and supervisor prepared his replacement?
5. Is your department free of old-time employees who are not pulling their weight, who haven't for years, and who won't between now and retirement age?
6. Are you free of inter-departmental friction at the cost of production?
7. Are you satisfied with your percentage of personnel turnover compared to that of similar businesses?

The only reason you hire people is because you need them. For what other reason would you increase your payroll.

Three basic work activities must always be performed in business — something of value must be:

- Created
- Sold
- Financed

Once a job has been described and authority and responsibility clearly spelled out people may be found to do it — NOT BEFORE.

The important thing about making responsibility and authority clear is that this provides a measure for the employee who wants to know how he's doing. Further, a job description is impersonal. It applies equally to anyone who accepts the job now or later.

Many executives avoid describing jobs for nebulous reasons such as:

"We're too small — we need flexibility."

"Can't do it — it would upset the personnel."

"It isn't worth the time it would take us."

Invariably the man who doesn't approve of descriptions knows very little about them.

Does it make sense to expect a man to do a job if he doesn't know what it is? If you know then you must tell him. If you can tell him then why can't you write it? Does it destroy flexibility to have duties spelled out so that anyone can understand them? Does it destroy morale if people know clearly what is expected of them?

One of the commonest problems in business today is the "left over" or "derelict" employee. The old boy who has been around the place for years and who knows that no one is going to fire him if he just shows up for work. He is the expert at knowing how it was always done but he never does anything. He drives you out of your mind because you can picture the payroll rand going for a good productive worker, but you haven't the heart to put this one out on the street. And after all, he doesn't cause trouble. If you did let him out, what kind of reaction would it cause among other employees?

Most significant however, is the fact that management put him where he is — that this malignancy was allowed to develop. The man never was disciplined to perform the well-defined job. In his day they didn't define jobs much anyway.

But he is not a total loss. He can serve well in the role of reminding you to look around. See what derelicts you are bringing along NOW to replace him when he retires. If you are not building your own department around the work to be performed, it's odds on there are derelicts developing right in front of your eyes. But don't worry about them; they will be somebody else's problem twenty years from now.

You've got your hands full worrying about other things now as it is. Probably the accounts are having trouble getting their reports out on time, because the sales department is late getting figures in. The sales department claim it can't do its job because production just isn't filling orders fast enough. Production is raising Cain because the sales department is expecting miracles without enough lead time between orders and delivery promises.

At least two department heads are barely polite to each other and flare up occasionally to the delight of subordinates who place bets on the outcome.

Maybe you feel that the above is the Managing Director's responsibility and you can't do much till he does. This is a common feeling among most managers. You should recognize that the individual manager is closest to his own department. He is in the best position to divide his work into individual jobs.

The insidious creation of the wrong type of employee, done through improper managerial techniques, is something to watch for. This kind of administrative error stems from the scrutinizing of the man when careful study of the work itself is more often required.

For example when a salesman's work is thoroughly detailed and understood by him it is usually the work not the man that requires steady surveillance. Don't harass the salesman by appearing to watch his every move. Rather look objectively at the job with him and keep the designated work straightened out. Where something is amiss, clearing up the work problem should be the objective not straightening out the salesman. With good management the work keeps proceeding and the man generally measures up to the requirements of the job.

Once an organization has been established, it's too easy to decide that its operation per Se, is successful and therefore, it is the man who must be at fault.

In summary, we suggest you consider the following steps in outlining jobs:

1. Clearly state company objectives and policies. (State objectives and policies of your department.)
2. Break down all work into its component activities. All business enterprises perform three basic activities. They must create, distribute and finance goods or services. All work should be divided by these three activities.
3. Once necessary activities have been logically defined and broken down, separate work into work points which constitute full time jobs. The activities defined in this step do not bear any necessary relationship to people who will do the work. One can only begin talking about assigning tasks to people after the tasks themselves have been defined.
4. Attention, however, must be paid to the basis for grouping work. Work groups should, insofar as possible, be made up of activities which are basically similar. But if the grouping of similar work does not result in full time jobs, it then becomes necessary to group work which is complementary, that is the work which precedes or follows must be included. With this attitude toward work grouping, the manager may use one or a combination of the following primary basis for organizing: physical location (geographical), product, process, physical equipment, customer type.
5. Define clearly the authority-responsibility-accountability relationship. The flow of authority and responsibility downward and accountability upwards should be definitely established and made known to all. Everyone should know his position and his relationship to others in the structure. A clear cut definition of this basic relationship is essential if co-operation and co-ordination of all activities is to result. Too often in business organizations people are left in the dark as to their exact status. In many cases lack of definition of authority and responsibility leads to friction and politics in the carrying on of the company's business.

Do not be afraid of limiting flexibility. Job descriptions make vacation and illness replacement much easier.

You can always change a job description that proves impractical or unsuited to changing times. Just make sure that everyone knows and understands the changes. There is nothing wrong with getting employees to help write their own.

They will quite often be harder on themselves than you would have been. It is usually best to make any changes in the company with the employee and make sure he knows why they are being made.

A well organized company is an excellent place to work. It has higher morale, more flexibility, greater security and greater opportunity for individuals.

1970

The 70's started the age of the practical computer made possible by the invention of the floppy disk and the microprocessor that occurred during the 70's.

- **1970** The daisy-wheel printer invented.
- **1970** The floppy disk invented by Alan Shugart.
- **1971** The dot-matrix printer invented.
- **1971** The liquid-crystal display (LCD) invented by James Fergason.
- **1971** The microprocessor invented by Faggin, Hoff and Mazor.
- **1971** AT&T Bell Labs conducted its first cellular phone test in Chicago
- **1972** Sales of the Volkswagen Beetle model exceed those of Ford Model-T.
- **1972** The word processor is invented.
- **1972** The 1st electric power plant fuelled by garbage began operating.
- **1972** The compact disc (CD) was introduced.
- **1973** Concorde makes its first non-stop crossing of the Atlantic in record-breaking time.
- **1973** The ethernet (local computer network) invented by Robert Metcalfe and Xerox.
- **1973** In NYC Martin Cooper, a general manager for Motorola, called rival AT&T making the first cell phone call using a cell phone the size of a brick.
- **1973** The Intelsat communications satellite was launched.
- **1974** Christian Barnard transplants 1st human heart without removal of old
- **1975** The laser printer invented.
- **1976** Stephen Wozniak & Steven Jobs founded Apple Computer
- **1976** Viking 2 soft lands on Mars (Utopia), returns photos
- **1976** The ink-jet printer invented.
- **1977** Space Shuttle above a Boeing 747 goes on it's maiden flight
- **1977** AT&T installed the 1st fibre optic cable.
- **1978** The last Volkswagen Beetle made in Germany leaves VW's plant in Emden. Beetle production in Latin America would continue until 2003.
- **1978** Sweden outlaws aerosol sprays due to their harmful effect on the ozone layer, becoming the first nation to enact such a ban.
- **1978** Garfield, created by Jim Davis, 1st appears as a comic strip
- **1978** Intel Corp. introduced the 8086 microprocessor. It was a 16-bit microprocessor with 29,000 transistors.
- **1979** Cell phones invented.
- **1979** Walkman invented.
- **1979** Scott Olson invents roller blades.

O AND M AS A TOOL OF MANAGEMENT January 1970 Vol. 8 No. 1.

Organization and Methods, commonly known as O & M, has its origin in the development and application of certain management principles and techniques over the past century by persons connected with both the private and public sectors. F. W. Taylor (1856-1915) could by right be regarded as the father of scientific management and of time studies while the description by Henri Fayol (1841-1925) of the principles of organisation and the functions of management is still accepted today by most experts.

Its introduction into the South African Public Service in the middle fifties probably gave the greatest impetus to O & M in our country. It has become firmly rooted, not only in the State departments and other public bodies, but most of the larger private undertakings in our country have turned their attention to specialists in the field of organisation and Methods. So much so, that there are very few of the larger undertakings where O & M has not become one of the most important tools of management.

There is nothing vague or secret or funny about O & M It is plain common sense. The greater the number of persons in any organisation the more susceptible it becomes to getting itself bogged down in its own operations. The importance of tomorrow becomes eclipsed by the urgency of today. Deadlines simply devour objectivity. Somehow, somewhere, someone needs to introduce some common sense. This is where O & M comes in.

It can be defined as the systematic and critical analysis of the organization, procedures and methods in respect of —

(1) The organisational structure in so far as its functional division is concerned;

- (2) The physical facilities (personnel, accommodation, machines, stores, equipment, etc.);
- (3) Material used or to be used; and
- (4) The conditions which are necessary for the execution of a task with a view to —
 - (a) The development of the most efficient or economical method for doing a specific job or task;
 - (b) The improvement of the facilities, material or working conditions;
 - (c) Determining the exact time it will take to execute a task according to the most efficient method chosen in order to:
 - (i) Calculate the necessary personnel, space, material and equipment;
 - (ii) Divide the work evenly between the required number of personnel; and
 - (iii) Fix work standards so that reliable planning and control measures can be established;
 - (d) The institution, standardization and maintenance of the new procedures and methods and the improved material and facilities;
 - (e) The promotion of a more purposeful approach by supervisors and workers to encourage them to show more initiative in bringing about improvements in organisations, procedures and methods.

Executives who have not previously had the advantage of the assistance of O & M usually have a fear that O & M may upset their personnel. This is why O & M is normally used in an advisory function only. Technically, it is a staff function, not a line function, thus it does not issue instructions nor does it cut across lines of authority — it only advises. The purpose of O & M is therefore to advise the chief executive officer of the organisation about problems pertaining to the organisation, procedures and methods in order to enable the chief to increase the efficiency of the work for which he is responsible, by either providing a better service or by decreasing the cost structure, or preferably both.

Because O & M acts in an advisory capacity its impact is related to the extent to which its advice is heeded. This is where top management support is absolutely vital. Advice has much more weight when top management has indicated that it accepts and believes in that advice. This approach, together with an inoffensive manner of the O & M-team (they are trained specially in human relations) reduces the degree of upset to a minimum.

In order to avoid the possibility of offence being taken by middle and lower management arising from an imagined interference by another manager of inadequate status, it is usual and necessary to have the O & M-team directly responsible to top management. Another reason for this is that top management is empowered to say Yes or No and this improves the effectiveness of O & M to a very great extent.

In these days of automation it is a popular belief that a computer can be installed to solve all the problems of management. This fallacy becomes more apparent when management has had all its figures, etc., fed into the machine without first studying the existing procedures and methods with a view to eliminating unnecessary work and improving the procedures and methods of that which remains. In other words, the O & M man is also an essential aid to automation.

O & M as a tool of management is becoming an essential part of the productivity war. Capital, labour, space, time, energy, material and equipment are essential in production. Their application in the production process must be as economical and effective as possible if better services at lower costs are to be achieved. Call in O & M to help management achieve this. Better services at lower costs must mean higher profits which can lead to higher wages and lower prices. This in turn eventually leads not only to a satisfied labour force and a higher standard of living but also to a healthy and happy community and country, an object worth striving for in the national interest.

It is becoming more and more essential to use O & M as a tool of management because of the manpower shortage. The objective must be to reduce the manpower requirements by reducing the workload and to make the available manpower more effective by concentrating on the main objectives.

PARKINSON AND THE PETER PRINCIPLE
Who is right? THE CASE FOR THE MIDDLE MANAGER
By David Grinker
August 1976 Vol. 14 No.02

EVERYONE is promoted to their level of incompetence. Hence the mess around us. This is Dr. L. J. Peter's basic thesis, which is too well-known to personnel professionals to require further explanation. Rubbish, says Professor Parkinson. Most people are competent. Only the Excelsior school system is incompetent. Who is correct? Was Dr. Peter's thesis just an irrelevant joke, applicable only in a very limited environment, or is there something to be learned from it?

The point of view of this article is that neither of the above pundits is wholly right, and neither 'of them is wholly wrong. The golden mean, the middle of the road, appears to be the answer. To counter Professor Parkinson, I quote a few recent examples of the Peter Principle in operation. I was involved in a car accident. My wife broke her collar bone. The doctors suspected that I had a skull fracture. They duly X-rayed my wife's skull, and my collar bone. Eventually the mix-up was sorted out and we were re-X-rayed and told to come back two days later. On our return my wife's file

had been lost. A new number and a new file were eventually produced, but without the old X-rays. I had visions of my wife being re-X-rayed. No- one knew what to do. I walked to the Casualty Department, asked for my wife's X-rays and was given my X-rays. Then we couldn't be treated because there was no cashier on duty to accept our payment, etc., etc., etc.

Another example. We booked in on holiday at a three star hotel in the Cape Peninsula, where some bright O & M man had substituted eiderdowns with buttons which buttoned onto the side of the bed for conventional blankets. The buttonholes were too large, and the first time that I turned round in bed the eiderdown flew off. The rest of my family had similar experiences.

And again. A bus draws up at a long queue at 17h00 in a city centre. It has been raining heavily, but all the bus windows have been left open on its trip from the shed into town. The passengers have to take their choice between standing or sitting in pools of water.

And again. My good friend, Mr. Mathew, phones me at a hotel on a night when I am in my room. He is duly told that I am out and that the message will be passed onto me. The next day he is telephoned by a Mr. Mathew from my hotel. I 'order two early morning teas, and one early morning coffee, and receive three early morning teas, and no early morning coffee.

The Peter Principle, applicable only to the Excelsior school system? Come off it, Professor Parkinson. You may trust jet aircraft pilots whom you have never seen, but do you trust hospital X-ray clerks or hotel receptionists?

No. There is justice in Doctor Peter's claim. But why? Why do these things happen?

After 'long thought on the matter, I began to see a little light. I think that one of the main causes for all these things is a vast gap at the Middle Management and Senior Supervisory level in all fields of activity. Middle Management which is either insufficient in numbers, inadequately trained, or inadequate in intelligence, is often at the root of the type of organizational failure described above. For after all, it is up to Middle Management to interpret the directives of top management and O & M specialists for the use of the ordinary clerk, the "Front-Line Soldier" in all administrative systems. Why? Why are competent Middle Managers so rare?

THE SUPER-MINICUTIVE

Then I discovered my own unique contribution to management jargon and theory, the "Super-Minicutive". Who, or what is the Super-Minicutive? The Super-Minicutive is the ideal Middle Manager, the person who is capable of plugging the Peter Principle gap. A Super-Minicutive (Super Mini-Executive) is neither a clerk nor an executive in the conventional sense. He is a person who is specializing at working at a supervisory level in the same way as a medical general practitioner specializes in general practice.

One of the failures in managerial training which has only recently come to be recognized by the learned authorities on the subject, is the failure to provide an incentive for persons to make a career as super-minicutives. Napoleon's statement that every private infantryman has a field marshal's baton in his rucksack has been taken rather too literally in management education. Everyone is encouraged to aspire for the top posts, but because the top posts are limited in number, the result is a large number of people in middle management who are not proud of their jobs or keen to make a success thereof, but who are, instead, frustrated failures in the race to become top executives. The idea that senior and competent middle management can itself be a career aim, is one which goes against the grain of our entire western managerial system. Consequently, the gap remains unplugged. When problems arise in administration, it is thought that the solution lies in bringing in a brilliant top director. This may be so, up to a point, but without effective middle management to interpret his directives, the brilliant top executive is at a perpetual disadvantage.

What we need is a type of executive who is proud to function as an effective middle management man, and who specializes in the type of problems encountered at that level. Just as a heart specialist of the eminence of Professor Barnard is not necessarily the best man to consult for an ordinary attack of influenza, the Harvard trained MBA at the top of an organization may not be the answer to the type of irritating problems which occur lower down, and which can only be solved by effective managerial skill at a supervisory and middle management level.

The aspiring chief executive may be quite unsuitable to occupy a middle management position effectively. He regards such a position as merely a stepping stone in his career, and rarely stays there long enough to acquire all the necessary skills to make a success thereof. Once again, the analogy with the medical profession is a close one. The trainee surgeon or eye specialist is not the doctor that people will go to with their intimate personal health problems. For this they go to the experienced GP, the doctor who aspires to be nothing more than a competent GP.

To be effective, a super-minicutive must to some extent defy the management pundits and specialize in narrowness, in the small picture, and in dealing with detail. Very little management literature up to now has been geared to the requirements of the super-minicutive, but lately, the "safe plateau" concept as an aim as distinct from the mountain

peaks, has had its proponents, even in some of the most respected managerial journals in the USA (See Harvard Business Review, May/June 1974.)

A crucial factor in the success of a super-minicutive is the ability to deal on an ad hoc basis with all the many types 'of situations which arise at the level where organizational systems are tested by direct contact with the public which they are designed to serve. The super-minicutive must be able to guide his clerical staff as to how to interpret regulations, handbooks, etc., when confronted with problems for which the regulation books do not provide guidance.

I remember some years ago listening to the present Town Clerk of Johannesburg discussing the super-minicutive problem. If I recall correctly, he said that the City Council could only function effectively if it took care, not only of its top management group, but also if it remembered the man who might be both able and intelligent and devoted to his jobs but who did not aspire to top management because he did not wish to devote his whole time or his whole energies to his job. There are many people who are having second thoughts about total, 18-hour a day, commitment to the administrative rat-race. In today's commercial and administrative environment, such persons cannot reach the top, except when an exceptional combination of circumstances arises.

Top management has the choice of using such persons as competent middle management which can help plug effectively all the loopholes which occur in day-to-day administrative processes, or it can throw them on an organizational scrap heap where their specific needs and motivation are completely neglected, in an environment which is totally committed to the precious few who will eventually reach the top management level. The wise exercise of this option in an organization can make a big difference in the extent to which the organization carries out its function effectively. A commercial airline pilot is regarded as a valuable staff unit. Hence Professor Parkinson's statement that he trusts airplane pilots whom he has never seen. A clerical organizer or transport dispatcher is not always so highly regarded by his employers; hence the type of failures in relation to hospitals, hotels, and public transport mentioned above.

1980's

Many of the most popular consumer products are still around today that were invented in the 80's for example: cell phones and home computers.

- **1980** World Health Organization announced smallpox had been eradicated
- **1980** 1st consumer use of home banking by computer (Knoxville Tn)
- **1980**MS-DOS invented.
- **1980**The first IBM-PC invented.
- **1980** Xerox PARC introduces the computer mouse.
- **1980** The AIDS epidemic is formally recognized by medical professionals in San Francisco, California.
- **1980** The IBM Personal Computer is released.
- **1981** Gerd Binnig, Heinrich Rohrer and Christoph Gerber of IBM developed the scanning-tunneling microscope. It laid the groundwork for nanotechnology.
- **1982** Richard Skrenta writes the first PC virus code, which is 400 lines long and disguised as an Apple boot program called "Elk Cloner".
- **1982** Movie "ET the Extra-Terrestrial" released (highest grossing film)
- **1983** The ARPANET officially changes to using the Internet Protocol, creating the Internet.
- **1983** Cryptographic Communications System & Method (RSA) patented
- **1983** Compact Disc recordings, introduced by Phillips and Sony in Europe in 1982, were introduced to the US.
- **1984**The CD-ROM invented.
- **1984**The Apple Macintosh invented.
- **1984** Desmond Tutu, black Anglican Bishop, wins Nobel Peace Prize
- **1984** Motorola introduced a brick-sized cell phone for \$4,000. [see Apr 3, 1983](WSJ, 10/30/03, p.A1)
- **1984** Hewlett-Packard introduced a printer using its ground-breaking thermal inkjet printing technology.
- **1985**Windows program invented by Microsoft.
- **1985** The Internet's Domain Name System is created.
- **1986** Desmond Tutu elected Anglican archbishop of Cape Town
- **1986** IBM produces 1st megabit-chip
- **1986** MNET started broadcasting as a subscription channel in South Africa
- **1987**The first 3-D video game invented.
- **1987** North American Philips Company unveiled compact disc video.
- **1988** Digital cellular phones invented.
- **1988** IBM introduces software for artificial intelligence
- **1988** Computers virus strikes Pentagon, SDI research lab & 6 universities
- **1988** NASA unveils plans for lunar colony & manned missions to Mars
- **1989** In Israel Dov Moran founded M-Systems, the original maker of USB flash drives (1999). He sold the business to SanDisk in 2006 for \$1.6 billion.
- **1989** East Berlin opens its borders

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An abridged version of a paper presented at a seminar arranged by the Local Government Division of SAIOM. In his talk Mr. Greenwood took the delegates through some practical steps to influence their perspective of organizational design. Unfortunately the excellent slide presentation cannot be reproduced here.

If I gave you a set of criteria and a list of functions performed by a hypothetical organization, I'm likely to get as many variations of your solutions as there are members in the audience. The tendency to organize and cooperate in interdependent relationships is inherent in human nature. Organizational behaviour is directed towards objectives that are more or less understood by members of the group. People have different perceptions as to the requirements of the organization. This leads to shifts in emphasis and influences the design of the structure. In this respect we are dealing with a dynamic situation which is people-based with their own Value Systems which are normative standards by which humans are influenced in their choice of actions.

When setting a framework for organization the following must be considered:

- Goal orientated System.
- Psychosocial Sub System — a people undertaking.
- Technical Sub System — people using knowledge and techniques.
- Structural Sub System — people working in patterned and integrated relationships.
- Managerial Sub System.

Management has commonly been described as "Getting things done through people". Perhaps, relating it to the above, it could be redefined as the attainment of objectives through people via techniques in an organization.

I don't believe that there is a single organizational structure that is right for every organization. What is "right" depends on what is necessary to achieve the stated goals and objectives.

In theory, rationality of design is an attempt to make sense out of things that have already happened. Organizational designs are seldom planned and represent only responses among conflicting interests. The eternal struggle for power, conflicting demands, and imperfect information all contribute to making rational organization design practically impossible. At best we can use that knowledge to develop changes that improve the situation.

A Need for Change

In considering a change to the organization one has to examine the need and desirability of change in the light of the disruptive effect that normally accompanies change of any type. Cosmetic change must be avoided at all costs. The need for change must stem from the needs of societies served by the organization both in the present and the future. Unfortunately many changes are made as a matter of expediency and with scant regard for the longer term implications. This is a sort of "creeping change that ultimately leads to the establishment of functional misfits. A common consideration in this type of approach is, "Put it in under Mr. X as he would be the ideal person to handle it," or "Put it in Department Y because they are the biggest user."

This is all very well, but time has the uncanny knack of changing this situation to the extent that Mr X or Department Y are no longer the predominant influence. A few searching questions should be answered, e.g.

1. What is the real nature of the function to be performed?
2. Where could the function be placed?
3. Where does it really belong?

What do we expect from an Organization?

An Organization operates in a dynamic environment and basically the main requirements of an organizational structure is that it should be:

- Dynamic, responsive and adaptive — Tuned to the needs of the community.
- Based on clearly defined channels of communication and authority.
- Capable of achieving effectiveness and efficiency.
- Self monitoring through a system of checks and balances.
- United in its objectives through genuine corporate harmony.

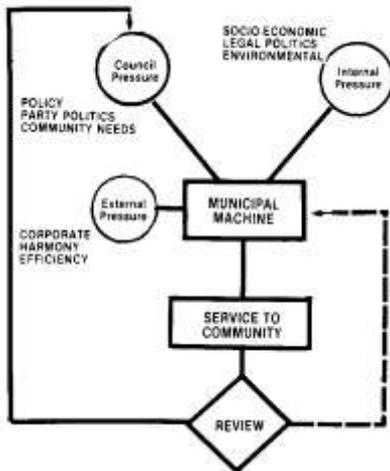
Where these principles are positively applied the work to be done will flow along clearly defined lines which are as short as possible. The purposeful flow of work is of the utmost importance in ensuring operational efficiency and providing the best possible service with the means available. An affection for tradition is admirable, but to rely too much on it or on past performance introduces the danger of our vision and attitudes becoming narrow and sterile. Responsiveness is one of the most important attributes expected of any public service organization. Responsiveness means more than care, concern or anticipation of future needs — although it includes all of these — it means a

pervasive conviction that appropriate techniques and technology is used to identify societal needs; that planning takes place to meet those needs and that resources are allocated in a balanced manner.

As mentioned before, an organization is a group of sub-systems where functions are structured to achieve specific purposes in a way that clearly defines and delineates areas of responsibility, clarifies relationships and delegate's authority.

A Changing Organization

Understanding why changes occur helps identify and remedy problem areas. Changes to organization structure are normally very gradual and never appear to be significant in terms of its effect on the organization as a whole.



1. Legislative:

Changes might be forced on the organization as a result of having to take on new functions or expanding on existing ones. As an example the Security function has increased substantially as a result of the National Key Points legislation. So what might previously have been a low key operation has perhaps taken on more importance. Care must be taken to view this requirement in perspective and sight must not be lost of the fact that one can over-protect. So too, when we experience organisational “shock waves” when reacting from acts of subversion. Suddenly everyone is security conscious, new procedures aimed at access control and evacuation is introduced; all ultimately being executed by more staff. The opportunity does exist to perhaps use this type of leverage to put a bit more muscle in the function. To be fair on the line manager, and I’m only using this as an example, perhaps that is their main recourse to achieving what they want. It’s known as re-active management or management by crisis.

The Business Licensing Ordinance changed the whole focus of maintaining a Business Register to one where the influence would be more in keeping with a revenue producing function. There is a possibility of even further developments taking place that will materially affect this function.

- The National Occupational Safety Act has also introduced demands on the organization.
- There is considerable speculation as to what impact the constitutional changes have in store for us.

2. Social:

The changing Social Scene is continually pressuring the organization to meet its requirements. The emphasis might be the provision of low-cost community housing schemes. This would require a special highly qualified infrastructure to deal effectively with the problem. An example such as Mitchells Plain springs to mind where approximately 33 000 houses were built over a period of 10 years to house approximately 180 000 people. Preparations are presently underway to develop a further complex in Blue Downs comprising 7 000 houses initially but planned for approximately 35 000.

A consideration often forgotten is that a local authority is an employer who has a social obligation in providing job opportunities for the labour class. On the one hand we are appealed to by government to be as efficient as possible and on the other hand we recognize the need to create job opportunity.

Providing a stable workforce and, through it, influencing that stability into the community possibly alleviates the problems and costs we would incur, directly or indirectly, in controlling an unstable social situation.

3. Environmental

Legislation and lobbying from environmentalists have resulted in special environmental control functions being introduced.

4. Technology

The rapid development in computer technology is changing the methods and procedures for performing certain activities. The availability of low-cost computer capability is creating a growing user base. Computer literacy is increasing rapidly which has a by-product of introducing an element of "instant expertise". I personally don't think that it's such a bad thing; I feel that it should be directed and developed rather than inhibited. We are standing on the low water mark of a high technology sea.

5. Operations

The elimination of areas of unnecessary duplication is another area which affects the organization. Meter reading activities which previously were carried out independently might have been combined. Stores operations might have been centralized.

With growth and complexity of the operation there is also the tendency to increase the specialization base and gradually one finds duplication taking place.

6. People:

One is inclined to overlook the fact that the Organization chart is the formal situation, but what really makes it work is the informal structure.

A considerable amount of organization restructuring has inevitably been around the capabilities or limitations of people. Organizations have been known to change in order to bypass a particular obstructive official or group of officials. Other functions have grown as a result of an individual quest for status or power or just a desire to achieve results.

Growth Specialization

Problems in communication and co-operation increase with growth in size and specialization of the organization. This development is aggravated by every natural desire to remain autonomous or independent which leads to the emergence of functions or activities that are duplicated elsewhere.

Do we have a Benchmark?

The activities of local authorities are often criticized as being inefficient and sometimes as being unnecessary. A suggestion frequently made is that local authorities can improve their operations if they were run along similar lines to private enterprise. Can a realistic comparison be drawn between private enterprise and local government?

Analytically, I think that it is quite valid to do so, for the following reasons:

Both operate under similar conditions and are subjected to varying degrees of the same constraints and pressures. Here I'm referring to Socio-economic, Political, Legal and Environmental, etc.

- In both cases responsibility centres on managing their respective resources.
- The only difference is in the measurement of Output. This is far easier to quantify in a private enterprise in terms of return on capital or rate of growth (of course in the longer-term it is a question of survival) whereas with local government which is service orientated, it is difficult to establish service levels let alone compare them.

However, one must be careful in making comparisons in this regard as the prime difference is the wide range of diverse services and functions directed at social utility instead of profit. For this reason one cannot take the comparison too far.

Furthermore, local government obtains its main funds by means of a tax, and because it does not make profits, it must husband its financial resources carefully. Perhaps it is better to state that local government should freely adopt the techniques and practices of private enterprise without losing sight of its *raison d'être* of social utility.

Comparing the roles of the Chief Executive Officer

In private enterprise the Chief Executive Officer operates with a far greater degree of autonomy than his counterpart in local government. He is solely responsible to his Board of Directors who involves themselves predominantly in matters affecting policy and long term strategy. On the other hand, in a local authority we have the reverse where, by tradition, there is a tendency for the policy-making body to involve itself in areas that are administrative and functional. This action, however well-intended, tends to diffuse responsibility and authority from the officials and has an undoubted adverse effect on morale and purposefulness. Both the Marais and Slater Commissions in South Africa, and the Maud Committee in Britain, have commented on the ills this causes in an organization.

Responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer

The Marais and Slater Commissions advocated that the Chief Executive Officer must be equipped to achieve executive co-ordination and efficiency and provide the Council with consistent policy advice. As well as supervising the preparation of annual estimates, capital expenditure and procurement of loans, the Commission emphasized the need for him to be responsible for taking an overall view of the development of the city — both physical and infrastructural.

One wonders whether this role is practical in the larger municipalities. The size and diversity of operations is such that somehow I doubt whether there are enough hours in the day for the Town Clerk to cope with the situation. He might succeed in taking a broad interest in certain aspects but I cannot see him making meaningful input on all of these aspects as well as fulfilling his ceremonial/civic functions.

This calls for a management style which is a departure from the traditional role of the Town Clerk. Here we are looking at a manager who is a specialist but yet a generalist and one who is an effective top level communicator. He must be able to draw upon the technical skills of his specialist advisor and be able to know enough about the subject to interpret and evaluate the recommendations of the specialist, selecting the course of action most relevant to the needs of the organization.

An interesting conclusion made by the National Productivity Institute in their investigation of eight Transvaal municipalities, was that there existed a tendency towards departmental isolationism which detracted from organizational harmony. They found the Town Clerk's role to be more of a channel of communication than executive, and they queried whether the status of Town Clerk was sufficiently strong enough to give effect to the requirements of his position.

An Organizational Goal

Consider the following as an Organizational Goal:

"To create a municipal area that allows its inhabitants to live in a secure, healthy and developing environment."

Assuming this to be a generally accepted goal, the attainment of objectives towards the goal will be influenced by the size of the municipality, population mix, stage of economic development, geographic make-up, etc.

In smaller municipalities one finds that functional responsibilities are grouped under the most professionally/technically qualified person mainly because of the qualification but, also in part, due to the fact that the activity level places him in a position to absorb the additional responsibility.

As the organization grows so too does the specialization requirement. This in turn influences the workload on the control posts and so a new structure is introduced to deal with the situation.

Conclusion:

If discussions so far have proved anything it is to establish quite clearly that a blueprint for organizational structure does not exist because:

- (a) The composition of the political structures through which the organization must work changes from municipality to municipality.
- (b) The goals and objectives may or may not be clearly defined and
- (c) The fact that these can be interpreted differently.

What one must recognize when considering change is that it is :

- (a) Disruptive and normally have a negative affect for a while, and should be carefully weighed against the advantages
- (b) There is no room for convenience groupings purely as a matter of expediency.
- (c) That there are long term implications involved.

Even though the organization is people-based it doesn't follow that we base it on people. The organization must fulfil the functions through the people (how else are we to identify weaknesses?). If the structure is correct and it doesn't work then the people element needs attention.

A strong motivation for action can be established if proposals:

- Improve the ability to provide consistent and supported policy advice for consideration by the political body without becoming "technocratic";
- Promote genuine corporate harmony within the organization.

Perhaps I sound tentative in promoting change. There are times when organizational surgery is necessary but, being a pragmatist, I believe that change should come rather as a conditional reflex than as "wind of change".

O & W IN A CHANGING WORLD
By E L van Schalkwyk — Senior O & W Officer: Alberton Town Council
Nov 1986 Vol. 24 No. 4

INTRODUCTION

For many years the O & W practitioner fought an uphill battle to prove his worth to the organization. Management was sceptical about the value of the O & W function, whether savings were actual or theoretical and also about the effect of O & W on loss control and personnel functions. Workers shared in the mistrust, especially where it concerned their jobs, their status and their future well-being. The O & W practitioner was regarded as a spy for management and a waste of time and effort. Consultants were often called in and to a large extent they caused hardening of attitudes because they left 5 and 6 volume reports but had no involvement in implementing proposals. Workers and managers became disgruntled and hostile to the discipline and O & W obtained a poor reputation.

The O & W practitioner found himself wasting valuable time in crisis management situations and fighting for his survival in the organization. Yet while he fought this battle he was called on to motivate people, keep them involved, take on ad hoc discussions and investigations, be diplomatic and cure ills, which the organization had experienced for years, in a matter of weeks. It should be quite clear why so many mistakes were made, after all these people were only flesh and blood. In addition there was incredible pressure and quite some antagonism which sorely tested both the expertise and frustration tolerance of the practitioner. Often he also had to contend with deliberately falsified information or misguided individuals who tried to "help" him. Sometimes he just was not equipped for the daunting, thankless and immense task which befell him.

THE GOLDEN ERA

As time passed, however, the O & W practitioner broke through the barriers and where he did, he was accepted and eventually sought after. Gradually he was to become an asset, instead of a liability, in the management team and just as importantly in the worker's haunts. Sheer persistence, hard work and some luck paid off. The golden age had arrived! Industry and the public sector saw the need for a person who could — divorced from the daily rota of production schedules, planning and operating meetings and production quotas — study the job dispassionately and ask the correct (stupid?) questions. Someone who could evaluate the alternatives and arrive at sound solutions to problems. Although there was still much worker and management resistance, the proposals started to bear fruit and measuring the effects was often a dramatic and overwhelming success.

It is safe to say that the O & W practitioner "had arrived", that he was an honoured and equal partner in the team. Obviously success breeds success and there was a sudden proliferation of O & W departments, divisions and sections. In many organizations the big team became the thing — often without any really measurable results. O & W, as a function, was gaining in respect and stature and it was almost unthinkable for an organization which was or wanted to be "on the map" not to have some O & W people. In this era it is true that O & W people saved millions for their employers, improved working conditions, achieved greater standardization and brought rationality to many organization structures. It is an overwhelming debt which we "newcomers" owe to those pioneers and our Institute is well respected purely because those selfless men put so much effort into what they believed. We must, however, be careful because it was when the Roman Empire reached its peak that the rot started to set in and its complacent, self-seeking leaders squandered what had taken centuries to build and cannot ever be rebuilt.

TODAYS CHALLENGE

I have hinted at complacency being a problem but something even more serious is happening. As the information we possess becomes more widely distributed, human beings are becoming more knowledgeable and better informed. Statements which were accepted as Gospel a few years ago are now being questioned and — in many instances — are being discarded. Even the certainties and pronouncements of a few months ago disintegrate as our knowledge expands and new facts are revealed and publicized. Someone has said that "the only certainty is that things will change". I think this is true and I wonder whether the O & W practitioner is ready for this change. Perhaps we are and perhaps we are not. But what are these changes? Where are they coming from? What must be changed? Aren't our techniques time honoured and well documented? Others have already started to ask these questions and we will have to ask them and supply the answers. To the creative, innovative and enquiring mind these questions present no problems, they believe in the strength of man and his ability to adapt. For the staid and conservative there is a shock in store. Some of us are just too bound up in our old ways, methods and techniques and the world is passing us by. There are reasons for this, many of them a throwback to the battle for survival. We were forced to take firm lines of action, to defend our discipline from attack, to protect our status, won at such high cost and in this we closed ourselves off to innovation. This had led to a single track mind and being ultra-critical of anything "new and untried".

It is always easy to criticize and to be negative, and not so easy to be positive. Is there any proof for what has been said so far? My contention is that there is much proof. For years we have treated man as a creature made up of separate entities; the working man, the family man, the parent, the spiritual man, the social man and the animal man. This approach caused us no end of trouble — think of what happened to Frederick Winslow Taylor at this life's end. The working man often becomes the parent, the social or the animal man while he is on the job and he takes the working man home with him. We observe more and more that man is a holistic creature yet the O & W practitioner in the past saw him as set apart from his job. Man is the prime mover of any type of change whether it is for better or for worse. This has extended into the functions we determined for organizations where personnel and O & W have a definite division — sometimes they are even in different divisions or in separate departments.

It is in this strict division of man and his activities where we have erred. Man cannot be placed into cosy, water-tight compartments. We have created strict organizational structures, disciplinary models, rules and regulations and we try to pour a man into these moulds. Man makes all these things work or not work and if we try to force him to conform, we must not become angry when he says "I only work here". When the man is not part of the solution he immediately becomes part of the problem and we should not be astounded at his lack of loyalty, motivation and initiative.

THE ROAD AHEAD

If I sound like a prophet of doom please think again. I have tried to put the matter into perspective to show the pitfalls and hidden traps and now it is time to make some suggestions (which might be all wrong in a matter of months). How do we go about redressing the situation?

The first step must be to re-humanize work. People are not machines, if they were meant to be they would have run in such a way as to be expandable. The first principle is to see man as a creative, dynamic and thinking being. In some instances this has been taken to extraordinary lengths. There is a strong move today to build organizational structures around people! To the O & W practitioner this sounds like sacrilege and must be avoided at all costs since it is diametrically opposed to everything we were taught. In certain countries it is not at all foreign and many huge organizations change continually as the incumbents of a post change. In Japan we often find that the formal organization chart or the formal organization does not exist. To quote Ken Omhae: "Most Japanese companies lack even an approximation of an organization chart. Managing directors who enjoy great influence on operations seldom appear in the company organization chart". Another organizational principle — limited span of control — is also being criticized heavily, as Rene Mac Pherson of Stanford Business School asks: "How many layers do you think it takes to run the Roman Catholic Church?" The Roman Catholic Church is composed of about 1 billion people yet it only has five layers of authority; the Pope, cardinals, bishops, priests and people. It is even more amazing if we consider that each priest controls up to 20 subordinate lay organizations and about 1 000 people! What all this suggests is a re-think of our attitudes and approaches to organization structures.

A second step, which still accentuates the role of people, is to obtain worker participation. I do not think there is one O & W practitioner who has not had to deal with a carefully investigated project and a well-compiled report which has been cast aside because somebody sabotaged it. People resent being told what to do even if it is in the form of a suggestion, yet they will set incredibly high standards for themselves if encouraged to do so. The British War Effort and the Japanese success story are excellent examples of what ordinary people can do with a little interest and inspiration. **People enjoy being involved and will work long hours without any financial rewards, if the work is interesting and they receive recognition.** Go through your drawers and see how many medallions, pen and pencil sets, trophies, etc. you have kept and then consider what we have said so far. To quote the Japanese again: "If you can only employ a man's hands and feet, you can replace him with a machine". We have to involve people's minds and no dictatorship — no matter how benign — has ever worked. People will become resentful and the backlash will surprise the dictator. People are adults and unless we treat them as such they will spend their creative energies elsewhere, eventually taking their bodies where their minds are.

The third and perhaps most difficult step is to plan holistically. We do need specialists — that is certain — but what we do not need are specialists or groups working at cross-purposes. The specialist has a job and that is to advise and assist the line manager wherever possible; not to be the manager himself. So many specialists want to see things their way only and all they achieve is to confuse the line manager and make him opposed to any specialty. Growth only occurs where both sides learn and where peace and stability flourish. It is in a work situation where all aspects of the work — safety, productivity improvement, personnel provision and utilization, loss prevention, quality assurance, human and labour relations become united with the object of improving the end-product by building the people, where man does his best work. To do this, we need clear plans and objectives, which recognize that people do the work, and where we remove the barriers which constrain us.

I hear cries of "Banish this chap to the Personnel Department" and I admit that this sounds like one of the humanistic managers of a few years ago who is off on his favourite bandwagon again. Those were the people who tried to get involvement by improving the hygiene in the office; better furniture, pleasant surroundings, improved tools, plants, music, etc. Sure, these things did help but not much. The theme of this treatise is not to go soft but to use those tough elements which really spur people to action. The organizations which flourish are measurement-happy and do have tight deadlines and objectives. Measurements are made very regularly, they are frequently refined and the standards are set more strictly, but the idea is that there is to be peer review and everyone works towards the overriding objective. Setting objectives is initially done on the basis of work measurement but once the person has accepted the standard he and his peers review it constantly. A man will "bust a gut" to achieve an objective standard, especially if he had a hand in setting it. Being purely people-orientated, humanistic and soft gets you nowhere but neither will being autocratic, dictatorial and pushy.

CONCLUSION

O & W is still relevant today with only one proviso, and that is that a long, hard look be given to how we are facing the emergence of new techniques. The function has outgrown the strict, precise, mechanistic values of the past and a more innovative and creative style must emerge. Previous generations leaned either to the humanistic or task-oriented styles of management, to compartmentalization of man and to an erroneous view of how he should function in certain situations. The worker of today spends time at work only if it is meaningful and fulfilling. We have to design work which a man can "write in his heart" and only then will he do the work with abandon. The challenge for O & W is to get people involved in their work, in getting people to challenge their attitudes and the way they are doing things at present, then and only then will O & W come up to expectations. Man is a thinking animal. Get him to think with you and both of you will grow.

PRODUCTIVITY AND CULTURE

**Brenda Sham, Professional Officer, Organization and Methods Department, City Council of Johannesburg
September 1989 Vol. 27 No. 3**

INTRODUCTION

Productivity seems to have a multitude of definitions and there are as many ways to improve it as there are experts. "Work smarter, not harder" appears to be productivity improvement in a nutshell. It is clear that managers at all levels are constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve productivity in their organisations.

Examples of traditional techniques are work simplification, work measurement, organisational analysis, ergonomics and operations review. These traditional techniques and the ever-increasing new ones are critical to productivity improvement programs.

Yet one potential avenue is still largely untapped and underexplored, but nevertheless ready for greater exploitation. This is the creation and strengthening of culture within the organisation.

CULTURE DEFINED

Culture plays a major role in determining an organisation's productivity, stability, motivation and everything else which brings about productivity.

A simple way of understanding culture is that culture is to the organisation exactly what personality is to the individual. It could otherwise be said that culture is a system of informal rules that spells out how people are to behave most of the time.

Successful organisations, from Anglo American and the SADF to the Catholic church, rely on a powerful shared culture to achieve results.

THE VALUE OF CULTURE

Culture, especially a strong one, is a powerful lever for guiding employees' behaviour at all levels. It assists them in doing their jobs easier and more effectively through the following ways:

(1) Guiding behaviour and performance.

If staff knows what is expected of them, they know how to behave in a given situation. They will also waste little time and energy trying to work it out for themselves.

(2) Moulding them into their roles.

People who start new jobs may think that a job is just a job, but when they choose a company, they often choose a way of life. It is the culture that shapes their style. It can make them a fast or slow worker, a tough or friendly manager, a team or individual manager.

(3) Letting them feel better about their work.

Strong cultures also enable staff to feel better about what they do. When a typist says "I'm with Barlow's" instead of saying "I'm a typist", she will receive comments such as "It's a good company isn't it?" She soon discovers that she is with a strong company with a strong identity.

(4) Providing a climate and environment conducive to productivity.

If a person works in an atmosphere of minimal uncertainty, is well adjusted to the "expectations" of the organisation and has a feeling of pride in the work and organisation, this person will certainly be more prone to productivity than one who is placed into a weak culture.

THE CULTURE STRATEGY

Aiming for business excellence cannot really be achieved without considering the organisation's culture. It has to be constantly assessed, strengthened and, if necessary, altered.

Before getting down to manipulating or adjusting corporate culture, managers must first understand, intuitively mostly what makes their culture tick. The next step is to develop a strategy which can define and promote values and beliefs and also create heroes and role models.

VALUE OF SHARED VALUES

Shared and stated values are a few thoughtfully chosen, carefully worded and dramatically enacted statements. They describe exceptionally high performance standards aimed at creating a unique and unassailable competitive advantage in the chosen market.

A shared value defines the fundamental character of an organisation. It is an attitude that distinguishes an organization from all others. It can shape what people actually do and, most importantly, it can become a reality in the minds of most people throughout the company.

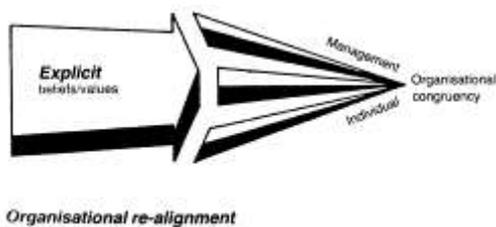
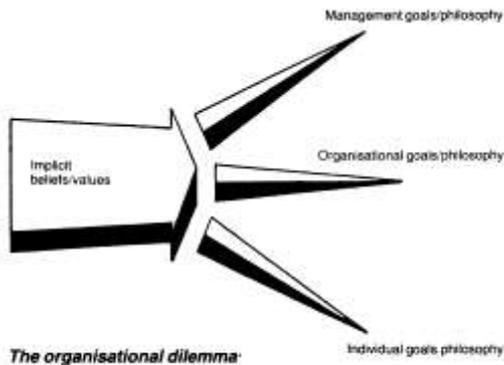
Values vary in scope and nature but spell out exactly what the company believes. Some such examples are:

“A helping hand in the land” , from a financial institution.

“Progress is our important product” , from a motor car manufacturing company.

“We care about your Comfort “ , from a hotel group. – “Your safety is our concern” , from a traffic department.

Values must be explicit. If they are only suggested and implied, the organization faces the danger of losing its cause, goals and effectiveness as shown in Albert Koopman's model.



DEFINING AND PROMOTING VALUES

Defining real values is tough. Few companies succeed without monumental struggle. Nevertheless, the power of a strongly stated, believed and energetically executed set of values is so great that for many the challenge is worth serious consideration.

Tom Peters, in “Toward Excellence 1983,” offers guidelines for doing this:

- Define two or three values central to your organisation;
- Debate the values;
- Translate them into mundane action. (The acid test is the application to everyday behaviour);
- Publish and promote these values by putting them into intensive day-to-day action in a thousand consistent, little ways at all levels of the organisation;
- Model or professionally demonstrate the values;
- Get feedback.

"I've got them (values statements) on the wall in my office, on butcher paper. When we sit around making practical decisions, we look up there and say, 'Hey is this us?' Eventually well lock them in concrete. But not quite yet."

— Donn Burr, people Express Chairman. “Customers are people. Your people are people. If the value system doesn't stress the worth and respect of people, it's nothing.” — CEO, specialty chemical company

THE PITFALLS

On the other side of the coin are the potential dangers of defining and declaring values which Peters again provides:

1. Watch out for having too many “core values”. One cannot excel at everything.
2. Watch out for premature commitment to any, but especially to new core values.

3. Watch out for getting too far out in front of behaviour with stated values. Loud trumpeting that we are a people-minded company from an institution with 40 years of continuously bad labour relations is just not credible. Rather live up to the values for a while and then announce them.
4. Watch out for believing that by leaving values unclarified you gain flexibility. Unclearly stated values create confusion in the ranks and a poor chance of personal commitment.

HEROES IN AN ORGANISATION

The heroes in an organisation are people who personify and epitomize the strength and values of the organisation. The hero is the great motivator, the magician, the person everyone counts on. They do things everyone else wants to do but is afraid to try. They show, often dramatically, that the idea of success lies within human capacity. Organizations have managers but they also need heroes.

HEROES VERSUS MANAGERS

Heroism is a leadership component which has slowly been forgotten by modern management. Managers today are rationalist who do strategic planning, write memos, devise flow charts and exercise cost control. Managers run institutions, heroes create them. Managers are decisive, heroes are intuitive — they have vision. Managers are busy; heroes have all the time in the world because they make time. Managers are routinizers; heroes are experimenters. Managers get the train running on time, heroes get the engine going.

VALUE OF HEROES

In life, in general and so too in companies, employees look up to certain people who personify their aspirations. It is less easy to aspire to be “successful” or “productive” or “smart” than it is to aspire to be like someone. “He’s just an ordinary man but look how successful he is. I too can be successful.” Culturally aware managers recognize this and take advantage of it.

Heroes reinforce the basic values of culture by:

- Making success attainable and human.
- Providing role models.
- Symbolizing the company to the outside world.
- Setting a standard of performance.
- Preserving what makes the company special.
- Motivating employees.

Traditional management skills will always be vital, yet it is the impact of heroes which often makes the difference between prosperity and ruin.

STEPS REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS

Executives and management have at their disposal a whole variety of tools with which to influence corporate culture, values and behaviour, primarily through personal example. Actions do speak louder than words and the actions of management are constantly read and interpreted by employees. These events are symbols that tell employees and customers what is important to the organisation.

The following steps can be followed:

• Study the physical setting

A company’s investment in bricks and mortar says something about its culture. Enormous discrepancies in the way physical sites are arranged for different classes of employees are a sure sign of a weak or fragmented culture.

• Test how the company greets strangers

Your first exposure to the company will be its reception area. Is it formal or informal? Relaxed or busy? Elegant or nondescript? Whatever the case, you must assume it reflects the values of its culture.

• Use management by wandering around (MBWA)

A manager’s wandering around is a powerful tool. This is a sure way to gauge the direction of your staff and to mould and edit their behaviour.

• Use myths and stories

Retelling old war stories” and unearthing new ones brings to life how the values are lived by people at all levels.

• Use consistent, repeated public statements

A clear public statement, on almost any forum, followed by consistent behaviour can be a powerful motivator.

• Use selective attendance of meetings

Who attends meetings, whether line or staff signals what is important and can be used toward value shaping.

• Follow up

Things that get swift and detailed follow-up by management will be perceived to be of real value.

• Use a thousand ways

Weave the core values into your informal chats. Make the core values part of formal performance appraisals. Hold formal value meetings. Post the values on the wall put them on letterheads. Inscribe them on paperweights. Talk incessantly about them. Model them, model them and model them.

CONCLUSION

The ultimate success of a manager depends to a large degree on an accurate reading of company culture and the ability to shape it to the needs of the market place.

It is expected that many readers will ask themselves if this culture idea is not perhaps "too soft" and can one really take time to deal with it. Indeed we should. It all comes down to understanding the importance of working with people in an organisation.

The institution builders of old knew the value of a strong culture and they worked hard at it. They understood how corporations shape personal lives and were not shy about suggesting the standards that people should live by. They saw themselves as heroes as symbolic players and knew how to dramatize and convey events to drive the lesson home.

If we are to have such great institutions tomorrow, the managers of today will no doubt have to take up this challenge again.

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1990

The 90's saw the invention of the internet and the rise of Microsoft. The 90's also saw the invention of genetic engineering, as well as cloning, and stem cell research. In the 90's SAIOM changed to SAIMAS

1990The World Wide Web and Internet protocol (HTTP) and WWW language (HTML) created by Tim Berners-Lee.

1990 Nelson Mandela (political prisoner-27 years) freed in South Africa

1990 Hubble Space Telescope sends 1st photograph's from space

1990 East Germany & West Germany merge to become Germany

1990 The Human Genome Project began and planned to sequence all human DNA by 2005. The database did not just store sequences, but linked them with citations to enable new discoveries.

1991The Greek cruise ship Oceanos sinks off the Wild Coast of South Africa (all passengers were saved).

1991 Linux was born when Linus Torvalds sent off the email announcing his project to create a new operating system.

1992 Microwave Observing Project begins (seeking alien life)

1992 Nov 23rd - 10,000,000 cellular telephone sold

1993 The Pentium processor invented.

1993 Oct 15th - Nelson Mandela & South Africa Pres F W de Klerk awarded Nobel Peace Prize

1994 Apr 28th - 1st multi-racial election in South Africa ends [lasted 3 days]

1995The Java computer language invented.

1995 DVD (Digital Versatile Disc or Digital Video Disc) invented.

1995 MNET's Digital Satellite TV is Launched in South Africa

1995 Space shuttle Atlantis docks with orbiting Russian space station Mir

1995 The US military Global Positioning System (GPS) became fully operational with 27 orbiting satellites and dual civilian use.

1996 Hot Mail, a free internet E-mail service begins

1997 From Austria scientists reported in Nature that they had demonstrated a form of tele-transportation. They teleported the physical condition of a photon using a phenomenon called entanglement.

1997 Philippe Kahn, founder of Borland Software (1983), pioneered the camera phone when he connected his digital camera to a cell phone

1999 The Euro currency is introduced.

1999 Space Shuttle Discovery completes the first docking with the International Space Station.

MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES

(By Dirk Ehlers, Assistant Director: Management Services, Office of the Inspector General, SANDF)
June Vol. 5 No. 2

A technique widely used for integrating individual and organisational goals is called "Management By Objectives" (MBO). MBO is primarily used as a planning technique and is based on the belief that the joint participation of subordinates and superiors in translating broad organisational goals into more specific individual goals has an impact on employee motivation. Introduced by Drucker in 1954, MBO has undergone many changes in application, ranging from Performance Appraisal to being an instrument of motivating individuals. MBO could very easily also be incorporated within the strategic management process activity of strategic planning.

PJ Smit & GJ de J Cronje (Management Principles, A Contemporary South African Edition, 1992: 75) suggests a process of MBO as illustrated in Figure 1.0 below. Here are some guidelines regarding the process.

Planning Premises

Planning Premises illustrates the commitment given by Top Management towards the implementation of MBO and the reasons for doing so. Because it is part of the Performance Management System of the organisation, subordinates, need to be educated and trained in MBO and explained what their role in process is.

Organisational Goals

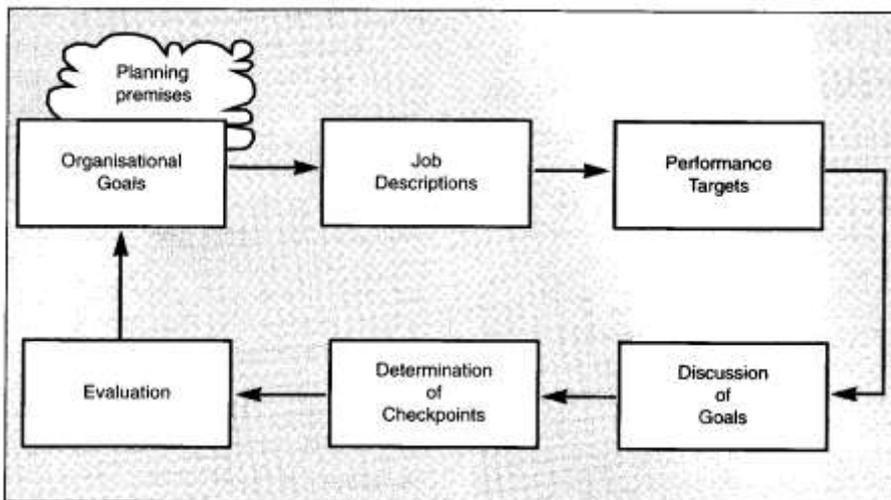
After stating the MBO philosophy via the planning premises, subordinates need to be educated about the overall organisation's purpose, mission and strategies. This attempt by Top Management is to ensure that each individual has a clear understanding of what the organisation is trying to achieve and should always guide the individual in the establishment of his/her own goals and objectives.

Job Descriptions

The goal-setting process starts with a discussion between a manager/or supervisor and the subordinate with regard to the individuals primary functions, roles and responsibilities. This two-way communication process is aimed at ensuring clear understanding on both the supervisor's and subordinate's job contents.

Performance Targets

The subordinate establishes from his/her job content key performance areas (KPA's) with potential performance targets for a specific period. Each performance target should be as quantitative as possible, specific, concise and time- related. This should be in a written format.



Discussion of Goals

In this step of the process, the subordinate and the superior meet to discuss the performance targets. As this step is a subordinate's period of discussion, both the subordinate and the superior must come to, an agreeable set of objectives to which both are committed. The discussion should also spell out the type of resources needed for the subordinate to work effectively towards goal attainment. The superior's role in their activity is primarily that of a counsellor who should ensure, inter alia, that the goals are attainable, provides stretch and that it will facilitate departmental and organisational goal achievement.

Determination of Check-points

The subordinate's progress towards goal achievement needs to be closely monitored. Periodic review sessions are needed to provide the subordinate with the opportunity to give feedback on his/her progress and for the superior to suggest alterations to objectives if changing external conditions have influenced or boycotted the achievement thereof. The superior also needs to coach the subordinate if progress is not satisfactory.

Evaluation

At the end of the predetermined performance period the superior should ask the subordinate to evaluate the degree of goal attainment, The focus of the session is to analyse goals attainment and the results achieved. The actual success or failures should be diagnosed to link specific actions to performance outcomes. If the outcome is satisfactory, the subordinate is rewarded through promotion, salary increase or a presentation depending on the degree and value of the performance outcome. If the outcome was unsatisfactory, specific education, training or development actions should be instituted which become specific change objectives for the next performance period and/or cycle,

Benchmarking

(By Cobus Terblanche, Business Consultant,) March 1998 Vol. 5 No. 1

Benchmarking is a method of measuring the performance of activities and processes against those of known or recognised leaders. Find someone who is doing it right or best and compare the differences. Learn from other procedures and methods to either apply or adapt them for own application. Benchmarking can therefore be regarded as the search for industry best practices that lead to superior performances.

The candidate processes for comparison should be reasonably available. The objective is to find similar situations that can be observed and evaluated to identify opportunities for improvement of own processes. The comparative processes may not be exactly the same but may bear characteristics that make them similar enough for use. The candidate processes can be either internal or external to the organisation

The candidate process for comparison and observation should not only be the best in the particular line of work but if possible, the best in the world. When this is not true (or sometimes even if it is) the comparison causes the improvement team to set their improvement goals too low. This will limit what can be accomplished. The aim of benchmarking is to gather ideas, but the application and improvement should spring from these ideas and not be limited by them.

Once an organisation decides to invest in a benchmarking program, it should be understood throughout all levels of management that benchmarking is an ongoing process and that it will require constant updating over time. The time and monetary commitment to a benchmark program can yield significant results. More important, if the program is conducted properly, professional ties are established which can provide a source for sharing information for years to come.

Setting out to benchmark a process requires the organisation to carefully scrutinize its own process (es) prior to talking to any other company. In practice it is a good idea to map the relevant processes by using a structured approach such as the IDEFO standard. This documented process will form the basis from where benchmarking can be conducted.

Success Indicators for Benchmarking

If benchmarking is not undertaken professionally, the risks for failure can be high. The following can generally be regarded as the success indicators for benchmarking:

- Clearly defined objectives for the benchmark project.
- Commitment to benchmarking by management.
- Clearly documented and an understanding of the organisation's own processes.
- A willingness to change and adapt based on benchmark findings.
- A willingness to adhere to the benchmarking code of conduct.
- An openness to new ideas, creativity and innovativeness in their application to existing processes.

THE BENCHMARKING PROCESS

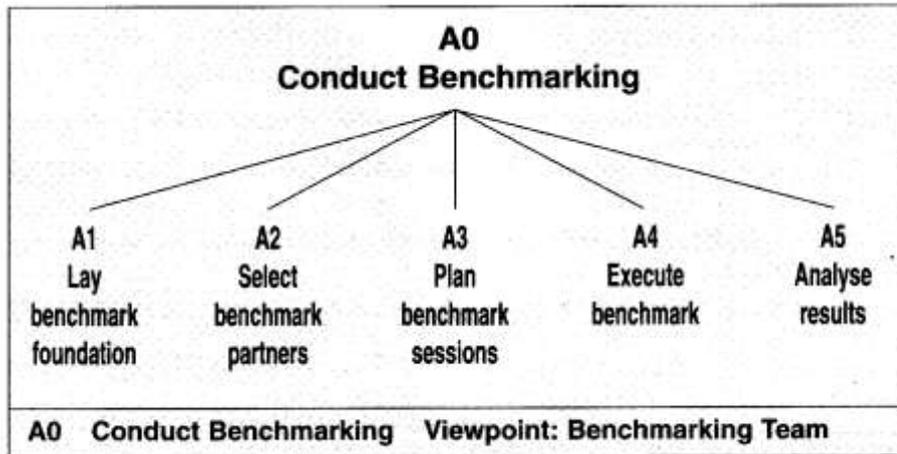
Figure 1 shows 5 activities to be performed as part of the benchmarking process. The diagram is in the form of an IDEFO node tree and the activities are discussed in more detail:

STEP 1. LAY A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR BENCHMARKING SUCCESS

Select the process to be benchmarked and then document the process and analyse the process to determine performance measures and performance gaps. These tasks are completed by the process improvement teams within the scope of an authorized process improvement project. The following questions can be asked, answered and documented by the improvement team during this phase. These questions will form the basis of the benchmarking effort.

- What is the process to be benchmarked?
- How does the process work? (The process should be mapped out by using a structured technique like IDEFO.)
- How can the process and the outputs be measured?
- How well does the process perform?
- Who are the customers?
- What products and services are delivered?
- What is required by customers in terms of products and services?
- What are the process performance goals?
- In what ways are performance goals not achieved?
- How does product and service performance compare with those of other organisations?
- Who receives process outputs (or provides process inputs?)
- What impact does it have if inputs or outputs are wrong or inappropriate?
- How is feedback on output (input) factors generated?
- How far beyond the primary stakeholders will errors have an impact?
- How well can the process adapt to changing stakeholder requirements?

Over and above the documentation of process related issues, the project team should also identify and document organisational, as well as technological issues and barriers. By the time this point is reached, process improvement teams will have a good understanding of the opportunities for improvement that should be addressed.



STEP 2. SELECT BENCHMARK PARTNERS WITH BEST-IN-CLASS PROCESSES

The first activity in this step is to create the benchmark team. Then, based on the process (es) selected, conduct research to determine the benchmark partners. Contact the potential partners, narrow the lists, define the aim and develop questionnaires. Set benchmark meeting dates and times with the final partners.

The tasks in this step include researching for benchmark partners. The partners do not necessarily need to be within the same industry. In fact, partners within the same industry may pose a challenge because such partners most likely would be direct competitors. If such a partner is chosen, the benchmark team must usually rely on public information rather than site visits to obtain their data. Once the partners have been identified, the questionnaires are developed and site visits are arranged.

During this step, these questions should continually be asking:

- Which companies perform this process better?
- Which company is best at performing this process?
- What can be learnt from this company?
- Who should be contacted to determine willingness to participate in the study?

The next task is to review all of the data collected on the organisations and narrow the list down to potential partners. Through research, learn something about each of these organisations that would make them a valuable partner. Prior to creating the short list, the benchmark team creates the criteria it will use in the selection process. A consensus must be reached on the criteria and agreements made that the team will stick to the criteria. Generally speaking it will take two to three in-depth telephone calls before a candidate will accept as a benchmark partner. Benchmark partners will want to completely understand what the aim is, ensure that confidentiality will be maintained and agree upon a date for the meeting. Again, expect that dates will be set for two to three months ahead. The more lead time offered to partners, the more inclined the benchmark partners will be to accept the benchmark. Once the partner has accepted, a short confirmation letter is sent, reviewing the date and time of meeting and thanking the partner for accepting the request.

Prepare for the benchmark (A3)

At this point, several benchmark partners have been identified and qualified; It is now time to prepare for the benchmark site visits. The success of the benchmarking process will be based primarily on three aspects:

- The extent to which the benchmarking team prepares for the interview.
- How well the interview is conducted.
- The interview debriefing process to ensure that all data is collected, organised and analysed. The results of the debriefing will determine the ultimate value of the final benchmark report.

3.1 Assemble Interview Folder

One of the keys to success for a benchmarking expedition is to become and to remain highly organised throughout the process. Some benchmark teams find it helpful to use a notebook or file to keep all data, information, and related documents together for easy retrieval.

It is important to restrict the benchmark team for the site visit. The ideal benchmark team comprises three persons, each with a specifically assigned role and responsibility. The best results are achieved when the focal point of the team is on one person. This allows for more intimate and informative conversation with the benchmark partner. The other two team members play important, but subordinate roles as monitor and recorder respectively.

3.2 Travel and Logistics

Few matters can more easily destroy a benchmark site visit than logistical problems. All logistics and travel arrangements must be made with great care. The best approach is to have a single person assigned to, and accountable for all logistics and travel arrangements. Confirm the scheduled interview

3.3 Confirm On-Site Interview and reaffirm the purpose, goals and objectives of the site visit

The benchmark team should spend time making final preparations for the interview. The following items should be covered during the preparation:

- Review the agenda and team assignments. Each team member should understand his or her role and the agenda items they are responsible for.
- Review all material provided by the benchmark partner. The material may expose areas of investigation that are not covered by the questionnaire. Formulate new questions and write them in the appropriate place on the questionnaire. Questions not noted in advance will probably be forgotten during the interview process.
- Review all material in the file or notebook. It is worth the time and effort to review the benchmark mission, goals and objectives and all of the process- related data.

Execute benchmark (A4)

Gather data on best-in-class organisations through site visits, telephone interviews and questionnaires, Debrief after each benchmark meeting to ensure all information was accurately received and recorded. The objective of the debriefing session is to organise the data collected and to begin the analysis phase of the benchmark. At this time, marginally useful data can be discarded and the remaining data organised for maximum usefulness with respect to developing TO-BE activity models.

Having completed the recommended preparatory work, the interview itself can be an enjoyable, informative and mutually beneficial experience. All the conventions of a standard business meeting apply - timeliness, professional courtesy, businesslike meeting management and open and honest information exchange. Maintain the benchmarking code of conduct (see below) at all times.

Whether information is collected through on-site visits, telephone interviews or questionnaires, benchmark teams should keep the main objective in focus, i.e. to gather data and information that will ultimately result in an action plan to dramatically improve or radically reengineer the business processes under study. The quality of the data and information that is gathered, organised, collated and analysed will directly contribute to the successful accomplishment of the purpose.

Analyse the benchmark results (A5)

The first step is to quantify the differences in practices and performance between the processes. Determine which partners' practices will help achieving the goals of improving the benchmarked process. Finally, determine how best to achieve the desired improvement in the benchmarking process and create a plan. The next task is to prepare the benchmarking report. The final benchmarking report consists of two sections:

- The confidential detailed report for internal use only; and
- A summary that can be shared with all benchmark partners.

The summarised version will differ from the internal version essentially in that companies and individuals will not be identified, and conclusions, recommendations, and the action plan will not be included.

The usefulness and applicability of the benchmark report will be based primarily on how well the benchmark teams collect and organise the data gathered during the site visits. The ultimate value of the benchmarking report will depend upon the quality of the data analysis, the insight demonstrated by the conclusions reached from the analysis, and the courage used to express the recommendations for change and improvement. The last and final step involves putting the plan into action by developing To-Be models, obtaining approval for plans and implementing the preferred process. Benchmark Status Report. Benchmarking Questionnaire Sample.

Benchmarking Ethics

The ethics of benchmarking are clear. Benchmarking is the process of obtaining useful information to help an organisation improve its processes. Benchmarking is not spying or copying. It is important that each member of the benchmarking team understands and adheres to the Code of Conduct as adopted by the International Benchmarking Clearinghouse. Individuals agree for themselves and on behalf of their organisation to abide by the following principles for benchmarking with other organisations.

1. Principle of Legality

1.1 If there is any potential question on the legality of an activity, don't do it.

1.2 Avoid discussions or actions that could lead to or imply an interest in restraint of trade, market and/or customer allocation schemes, price fixing, dealing arrangements, bid rigging, or bribery. Don't discuss costs with competitors if costs are an element of pricing.

1.3 Refrain from the acquisition, disclosure or use of trade secrets by any means that could be interpreted as improper, including the breach or inducement of a breach of any duty to maintain secrecy.

1.4 Do not, as a consultant or client, extend one benchmarking study's findings to another company without first obtaining the permission from the parties to the first study.

2. Principle of Exchange

2.1 Be willing to provide the same type and level of information that you request from your benchmarking partner to your benchmarking partner.

2.2 Communicate fully and early in the relationship to clarify expectations, avoid misunderstandings, and establish mutual interest in the benchmarking exchange.

2.3 Be honest and complete.

3. Principle of Confidentiality

3.1 Treat benchmarking interchange as confidential and exclusive to the individuals and companies involved.

3.2 A company's participation in a study is confidential and should not be communicated externally without their prior permission.

4. Principle of Use

4.1 Use information obtained through benchmarking only for purposes of formulating improvement of operations or processes within the companies participating in the study.

4.2 The use or communication of a benchmarking partner's name with the data obtained or practices observed, requires prior permission.

4.3 Do not use any benchmarking information as a means to market or sell.

4.4 Contact lists or other contact information provided by the International Benchmarking Clearinghouse may not be used for marketing in any.

5. Principle of First Party Contact

5.1 Initiate benchmarking contacts through a designated benchmarking contact.

5.2 Respect the corporate culture of partner companies and work within mutually agreed procedures.

5.3 Obtain mutual agreement with the designated benchmarking contact on any hands-off communication or responsibility to other parties.

6. Principle of Third Party Contact

6.1 Obtain an individual's permission before providing his or her name in response to a contact request.

6.2 Avoid communicating a contact's name in an open forum without the contact's prior permission.

7. Principle of Preparation

7.1 Demonstrate commitment to the efficiency and effectiveness of benchmarking by being prepared prior to making an initial benchmarking contact.

7.2 Make the best of your benchmarking partner's time by being fully prepared for each exchange.

7.3 Help your benchmarking partners prepare by providing them with a questionnaire and agenda prior to benchmarking visits.

8. Principle of Completion

8.1 Follow through with each commitment made to your benchmarking partner in a timely manner.

8.2 Complete each benchmarking study to the satisfaction of all benchmarking partners as mutually agreed.

9. Principle of Understanding and Action

9.1 Understand how your benchmarking partner would like to be treated.

9.2 Treat your benchmarking partner in the way that your benchmarking partner would want to be treated.

9.3 Understand how your benchmarking partner would like to have the information he or she provides handled and used, and handle and use it in that manner.

Etiquette and Ethics

In actions between benchmarking partners, the emphasis is on openness and trust. The following guidelines apply to both partners in a benchmarking encounter.

- In benchmarking with competitors, establish specific ground rules up front, e.g., "We don't want to talk about those things that will give either of us a competitive advantage, rather we want to see where we can mutually improve or gain benefit."

- Do not ask competitors for sensitive data or cause the benchmarking partner to feel that sensitive data must be provided to keep the process going.

- Use an unbiased third party to assemble and blind competitive data, with inputs from legal counsel for direct competitor comparisons.

- Consult with legal counsel if any information gathering procedure is in doubt, e.g., before contacting a direct competitor.

- Any information obtained from a benchmarking partner should be treated as internal privileged information.

Benchmarking Protocol

- Know and abide by the Benchmarking Code of Conduct.
- Acquire knowledge on benchmarking and follow a benchmarking process.
- Determine what to benchmark, identify key performance variables, recognise superior performing companies, and complete a rigorous self-assessment.
- Develop a questionnaire and interview guide and share these in advance if requested.
- Have the authority to share information.
- Work through a specified host and mutually agree on scheduling and meeting arrangements.
- Follow these guidelines in face-to-face site visits:
 - Provide an agenda in advance.
 - Be professional, honest courteous and prompt.
 - Introduce all attendees and explain why they are present.
 - Adhere to the agenda: maintain the focus on benchmarking issues.
 - Use language that is universal, not one's own jargon.
 - Do not share propriety information without prior approval from the proper authority of both parties.
 - Share information about your process(es) if asked, and consider sharing study results.
 - Offer a reciprocal visit.
 - Conclude meetings and visits on schedule.
 - Thank the benchmarking partner for the time and for the sharing.

The source utilised to compile this paper is the USA Department of Defence's Corporate Information Management CD for functional Process Improvement.

2000-2010

The past decade has seen engineers build mega constructions, people are working in space and South Africa, against all odds hosted a very successful FIFA world cup.

- **2000** Gisborne, New Zealand population 32,754 is first city in the world to welcome in the new millennium
- **2000** Patent on RSA cryptograph algorithm ends
- **2000** The first crew arrives at the International Space Station.
- **2001** Wikipedia, a free Wiki content encyclopaedia, goes online.
- **2001** The Russian Mir space station is disposed of, breaking up in the atmosphere before falling into the southern Pacific Ocean near Fiji.
- **2001** Apple releases the iPod.
- **2001** 9 – 11 Terrorist hijack 2 passenger planes, crashing them into New Yorks World Trade Towers, causing the collapse of both and death of 2,752 people.
- **2001** The Leaning Tower of Pisa reopens after 11 years and \$27,000,000 to fortify it, without fixing its famous lean.
- **2002** Euro banknotes and coins become legal tender in twelve of the European Union's member states.
- **2002** Ford Motor Co. and Canadian fuel cell developer Ballard Power Systems Inc. jointly unveiled a hydrogen-fuelled internal combustion engine-driven generator they said could help pave the way toward the commercialization of fuel cell technology.
- **2004** The Millau viaduct, the highest bridge in the world, near Millau, France is officially opened.
- **2004** A 9.3 magnitude earthquake creates a tsunami causing devastation in Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Maldives and many other areas around the rim of the Indian Ocean, killing 230,000 people.
- **2004** The official opening of Taipei 101, the current tallest skyscraper in the world, standing at a height of 509 metres (1,670 feet).
- **2005** YouTube, the popular Internet site on which videos may be shared and viewed by others, is launched in the United States.
- **2005** The Superjumbo jet aircraft Airbus A380 makes its first flight from Toulouse, France.
- **2006** Western Union discontinues use of its telegram service.
- **2006** English-language Wikipedia reaches its one millionth article
- **2006** Construction begins on the Freedom Tower for the new World Trade Centre in New York City.
- **2007** In Sydney, Australia, 2.2 million people take part in the first Earth Hour.
- **2008** The construction of the world's first building to integrate wind turbines completes, in Bahrain.
- **2008** Barack Obama becomes the first African-American to be elected President of the United States
- **2009** Mark II.5 Skytrain cars enter service in Metro Vancouver.
- **2010** Volcanic ash from the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull in Iceland leads to the closure of airspace over most of Europe.
- **2010** the Gautrain commences partial operations in June, in South Africa, first week of operations transported 40 000 passengers
- **2010** South Africa hosts FIFA World Cup. 3,18 million fans attended 64 matches

Management Innovations

A glance at the Management Service Body of Knowledge (see back cover) can quite easily intimidate the prospective Management Services professional. The model implies that the Management Services functionary; should possess these knowledge and skills. However, the extent of the implied knowledge and skills surpasses that of the average person's ability to acquire within the span of a normal lifetime. It is then generally argued and assumed that the Management Services professional need not have in depth knowledge of all these fields but must have the capacity and inclination to research whatever may be required to facilitate a particular intervention. Daft & Marcic relays some very revealing observations titled "Ebbs and Flows of Management Innovations, 1950 - 1995" and add that most managers are familiar with the innovations.

- Here's their list of innovations
 - Decision Trees
 - Managerial Grid
 - Satisfiers / Dissatisfiers
 - Theory X and Theory Y
 - Brainstorming
 - T-Group Training
 - Conglomeration
 - Management by Objectives
 - Diversification
 - Theory Z
 - Zero-Base Budgeting
 - Decentralization
 - Quality Circles
 - "Excellence"
 - Restructuring
 - Portfolio Management
 - MBWA
 - Matrix
 - Kanban
 - Entrepreneuring
 - Corporate Culture
 - One Minute Managing
 - Downsizing
 - Self-Managed Teams
 - TQM
 - Learning Organisations
 - To the list the following could be added.....
 - Systems Approach
 - Activity-based Costing
 - Business Process Re-engineering
 - Balanced Scorecard
 - Benchmarking
 - Performance Management
- and ... the list can go on and on!

Quite daunting! Especially if one realises that these are all tools which a Management Services professional should have in hand! Each of these represents some framework of understanding, or for thinking about some dimension of management or it presents some technique or approach which can be used to solve a problem or to enhance or change some dimension of public or private endeavour. These innovations or techniques span just about all facets of the Management Services Body of Knowledge and are really the intervention techniques a Management Services professional must be able to select from and apply for a particular organisational development intervention.

Apart from the knowledge and skills traditionally included in the management Services courses, no programme of higher learning attempts to cover all these and similar types of innovations in a specific qualifying programme. Management Services professionals and managers rely on seminars and short courses to learn about the mere existence of these innovations, let alone acquire the skill to apply them. People are often discouraged from attending seminars and conferences due to the costs involved but as these are about the only forums where one can learn about these techniques, it seems essential to deliberately budget and plan for attendance. The proviso is obvious: it must be incorporated in a career- plan and managed accordingly.

It demands and requires a deliberate effort to become committed and acquire the knowledge and skills to use it. The policy on continued professional development actually is a challenge that can keep one busy for a lifetime.