



The Human Cost of Control – pt1

Expanding on “The Darker Side of Toyota”

Considerations of best-practice methods and the long-term cultural impact on organisational and social performance and progress.

By D R Bovis

Table of Contents

Context – A fish rots from the head:	3
The Sunday Times	4
Why?	4
PART 1	6
Learned Helplessness	6
The 5 Monkey Experiment	7
<i>What does it really teach us?</i>	8
<i>Matryoshka.</i>	10
4 Drive Theory	11
There are no birds in last years nest:.....	12
Throwing Rocks or Birds	13
The Cost of Control	14
The icing on the ‘Danger’ cake.	15
Learning	16
DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL YOU HAVE WATCHED THE VIDEO.	17
The Big Issue?	18
<i>This is the situation we find ourselves in today!</i>	18
Part 1. Summary	18
ADDENDUM	21
Toyota’s - 14 management principles	21
Relative to The Toyota Way.....	21
Bibliography	21
<i>Other References.</i>	22

Context – A fish rots from the head:

The following is an attempt to provide a tentative introduction to the complexities of leadership at a psychological and neurological level. This is currently ignored at a cultural level, often at the expense of efficiency, effectiveness and the performance / profitability possible where 'Systems' inclusive of 'People' / 'Human Factors' are understood.

The sustainability of organisational performance through employee / participant engagement is the utopian objective most claim to seek. Failure to achieve this, has origins we can understand today; Yet in our current and common ignorance of such issues, we are consuming a finite planet at an ever increasing rate purely because we're stuck in a Keynesian, Capitalist belief system, promoting 'Growth' as an economic 'good', irrespective of resource availability / sustainability.

This is a harsh truth that threatens every aspect of our current way of life. We perceive current conditions as 'good', advanced, evolved ... comfortable .. and therein lies the problem! We humans naturally protect our perceptions of 'good' (e.g. comfort) and oppose anything that is a 'threat', especially when 'new'. Regardless of it being a 'hiss in the grass' or a new 'philosophy', if it's 'New' we humans will make it guilty until proven innocent.

I'm convinced that understanding the neuro-psychology of such automatic defence mechanisms, holds the key for our liberation from them. It's this that will allow the change we so desperately need, providing us the capacity to make a choice as a human race, before that change is forced upon us by nature.

There are old sayings like, '**Never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you**'. My concern is that trouble for the human race is here and troubling us, but in our perceived comfort zones, confirmed as 'good' by the economic model we've chosen, which itself confirms wealth and growth (linked to material goods) as 'good' over and above virtue, we are blind to the threat.

I hope to demonstrate why the psycho-neurological understanding of a fixed worldview vs. 'opening eyes' to the impact of a philosophy based on an economic model must be our priority, or Rio+20 meetings and [UNEP Geo5](#) reports* which state;

"While humans have long been aware of the effects of their activities on the local environment, only in the last few decades has it become apparent that these activities can cumulatively affect the global environment"

will continue to see the slow progress reported against targets around issues of depleting fish stocks, atmospheric pollution & biodiversity threatening approx. 20% of the worlds vertebrate population.

The deeper awareness to develop is that of assumption in communication. "Other humans are aware of the effect of their activities" is an assumption, as it just simply isn't the case for the majority who exist in ignorant bliss in the 'developed' world, having been churned out of the increasingly technological and inflexible (Educational / political / economic) 'System', driven by fiscal targets to consume through greed and a belief in growth ahead of sustainability.

Somewhat surprisingly, to address such a global, 'human race' sized issue, requires those leaders establishing global policy, understand the smallest of detail, including the formation of the brain and what's required if the individual human is to take full responsibility for their own actions, as they impact others, now *and* in the future. **To establish methods by which we see the nature of people change, we must essentially design approaches and conditions that change their nature.**

* <http://www.unep.org/geo/geo5.asp>

The Sunday Times

On Sunday 5th February 2012, The Sunday Times ran an article entitled;

“Toyota Accused of deceiving Customers”.

It claims dealers will be fined by Toyota if they are found to be fixing faults under warranty which are not safety critical or specifically highlighted by the customer.

Toyota strongly refutes the claim.

Interestingly, on-line responses from the public included much conjecture and inaccurate opinion about the past. One commentator stating, on-line;

“Did they not learn anything from their humiliation in the States following the investigation into dozens of deaths due to unintended acceleration”

It seems on further investigation that there is not one aspect of that sentence that has any truth in it!

It is essential we consider with a degree of depth and rigor, the impact of such stories, and the ‘Face-value’ acceptance of reports and the presentation of so called ‘facts’, alongside our capacity to *ignore* reality and tangible threats, when, we find ourselves locked into our own ‘realities’.

Why?

Why do accounts of ‘Good’ or ‘Bad’ become exaggerated?

Why do we find it acceptable to openly make totally false claims about reality?

Why do we ignore real ‘greed driven horror stories’, like the culling of whales, sharks and tigers for money, and the economic / fiscal driving force behind such actions and behaviours that we promote as good through our approach to education and consumption.

Such atrocities are still common practice today, and happening on an increasingly large scale due to the planets ever increasing population. These actions remove or damaging significant hinge pins from the eco-system threatening the natural balance in the world and thus, ultimately, our own survival on the planet.

We ignore the significant reduction in the quantity of ‘bees’, able to pollinate our primary food sources. We ignore the infertility rates of fish dropping in our oceans, yet we continue to bleach, consume fossil fuels, pollute and genetically engineer technological solutions in the pursuit of growth, ignorant of the ever pressing need to stop growing and find a model that works in support of a reduced population and sustainable solutions to provide ourselves ‘comfort’, without the threats, so big, we fail to see them.

It seems, we are facing ‘Elephant in the room’ issues of global proportions.

Some principles and details, to help set global / human ‘root-cause’ context follow.



It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent. It is the one most adaptable to change.

- CHARLES DARWIN

PART 1

Learned Helplessness

In 1964, Martin Seligman & Steve Maier did an experiment on 3 groups of dogs.



They electrocuted them!

Some of the dogs were free to stop the pain by pressing a lever; others couldn't, as the lever was disengaged from the circuit. The dogs that couldn't stop the pain were later strapped down to an electrified metal plate in a chamber. A small wall separated this plate from a second area, which was insulated.

Individually each dog was strapped down to the first plate. The electric was turned on. The dog yelled, screamed, barked, urinated, defecated, strained and generally did everything in its power to remove itself from the pain coursing through its entire body.

This process was repeated a number of times. Eventually, the straps were removed. The dog was free to leave the electrified plate and move to the safety of the insulated area over the low barrier.

Again, Seligman turned on the electric. The dog just lay there whimpering, taking the pain. It was free to move away from the cause of the pain, but it didn't. It stayed there, in agony.

A *small* step over a *small* obstacle would have relieved the pain but the dog never found out. It **had stopped trying** to find a solution.

This experiment was horrific, but it was also enlightening. It demonstrated a principle we had only inferred into metaphor until that time. Seligman called the principle 'Learned Helplessness'. It is a principle that can impact every adult mammalian brain.

Humans at work are adult mammals! Under 'control' from 'systems' their 'seeking mechanism' turns off – they stop trying!

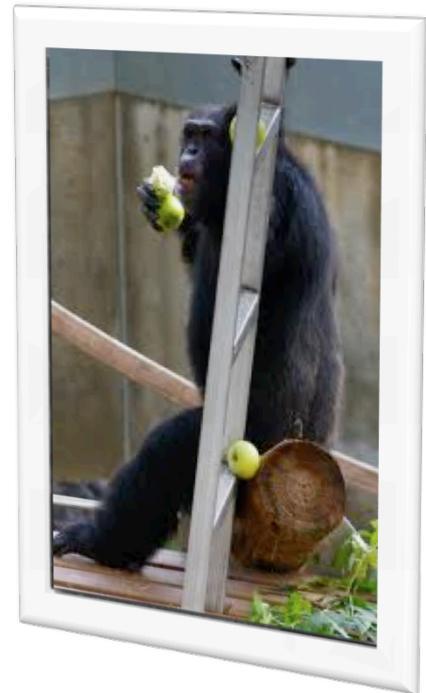
Humans at work are adult mammals! Under 'control' from 'systems' their 'seeking mechanism' turns off – they stop trying!

The 5 Monkey Experiment.

It's a common story used in training environments, but for those who don't know it, here it is in brief.

A Chimp is in a cage with a ladder. There is some fruit on top of the ladder. The chimp naturally starts to climb the ladder to get to the fruit. Icy water is sprayed on the chimp. We all know Chimps don't like cold water - the chimp retracts from the ladder without the fruit.

A second chimp is introduced to the cage. He see's the fruit and goes to climb the ladder. The first chimp stop's the second from climbing the ladder and getting to the fruit. The second chimp is now worried, but attempts to climb the ladder again. Icy water is sprayed on the 2nd chimp. He now knows what the 1st chimp was worried about.



A 3rd chimp is introduced to the cage. He goes to climb the ladder. The 1st & 2nd Chimp stop him. The 3rd chimp doesn't attempt to get the fruit again until the others aren't looking. He get's his blast of water and never goes near the ladder again.

This is repeated for a 4th and 5th Chimp. However, the pressure of the 1st three chimps is enough to convince the 4th not to try at all. The same occurs with the 5th chimp.

The water supply is now disconnected from the spray. The chimps are free to take the fruit.

However, when a new chimp is introduced, they are convinced not to go near the ladder by the group. Each time a new chimp comes in, one of the 1st 3 chimps is removed. This continues until there are none of the original chimps in the cage that have experienced the water spray.

The end result; All subsequent chimps in the cage never go near the ladder to get the fruit. None of the chimps have any experiential knowledge of why they can't have the fruit on top of the ladder, but they all conform.

Any new chimps introduced inherit the attitudes, opinions and behaviours of those there before it. END.

What does it really teach us?

Similar accounts of this experiment have been used in various ways. Consultants, for example, might use this story to demonstrate how their representatives can 'Go Native' when embedded in an organisation. Trainers use it to demonstrate how we inherit cultural norms across generations in organisations etc.

It shows how we can succumb to any 'group-think' that pervades a socio-technical environment. Where people accept and embed 'Good' or 'Bad' into their own worldview through popular opinion as much as through 1st hand experience. (Where the presentation of opinion by another = Experience – Visual / audio stimulus combined with an emotional response).

The management here couldn't organise a piss-up in a brewery

-vs-

All workers are lazy

These serve as common examples of 'Group-think' that can exist in conflict with each other in different groups in the same organisation, undermining the capacity to benefit from emotionally mature co-operation, performance and benefit / profit.

The same effect influences belief at a global and social level within a multitude of socio-technical environments. The NHS and other public sector organisations, politics, education, families, religions, countries: Regardless of conditions, inherited belief can be found transcending generations, in some cases for 100's if not 1000's of years. The transition of beliefs such as

The Earth is Flat vs. The Earth is Round.

Has history and today's beliefs built upon them.

Whether it's WMD in Iraq, Israelis /Palestinians and the Gaza Strip or Tiger Whiskey and Shark fin soup sold for vast sums of money to impart the properties of the animal to the human (perpetuating the horrific acts of war / terrorism / hunting to destruction, respectively), each behaviour is an outward manifestation of the individual and group 'belief', with a mix of philosophical / justice / greed / survival derived definitions of 'Good' influencing the individual / group belief.

Such inherited beliefs are typically challenged and changed only when attitudes shift. This typically only happens on the provision of irrefutable proof and answers clarifying previous speculation and conjecture. This is often influenced by 'technology', e.g. Bromodioxymurine based cellular growth analysis proving the suspicion that 'Neurogenesis' (imprinting) occurs in the adult human brain at approx. 12% / month.

History and modern scientific breakthroughs all have an impact on our current perceptions of the world and what is 'good' or 'bad'.

When considering today's inherited beliefs about leadership / best-practice in organisations and society alike, we might consider the historic development of a single state, the monarchy, parliament, the Industrial revolution, the development of Keynesian Economics, Capitalism and Democracy. Especially where democracy is considered in Aristotle's Politics, as 'Corrupt' where it puts the generation of Wealth before the generation of virtue. (To be explored in more depth in another paper I'll call "Philosophy as it challenges the constitution of business today").

In relation to business, I'd like the reader to consider the following 'inherited', or at least, 'unchallenged belief'.

The utilisation of systems designed to control processes are effective when controlling people.

I'd like you to consider this, because, following advances in Neuroscience, like those alluded to above, there is strong evidence mounting to suggest this is not the case. IF we accept there is a problem with this 'belief' inherited based on past wisdom, we start to see that it becomes a core component in the construct of our current conditions, leading to target driven behaviours often in conflict with desired outcomes.

Q1. So why do we accept inherited opinion that leads to a reliance on 'Command & Control' and thus, in often case, provokes various degrees of 'learned helplessness' systematically undermining the human capital of our organisations and society, in a world verbally citing the need for 'Innovation' and 'Engagement'?

Why do we pay lip service to headlines and fads while failing to challenge the 'approach' and 'beliefs' that underpin the behaviours that detract from our stated intent?

Matryoshka.

There are a number of accounts of the 5-monkey experiment. Many have been exaggerated and presented in different ways to suit the 'emotional' message the teller wants to portray.

This highlights one answer to **Q1.** above;

The power of self-interest over outcomes.

My own research confirms the 5 Monkey experiment did take place, but it was all a little more subtle than presented, with 'Female Rhesus monkeys' encouraging the others not to get the fruit, through *some* physical manipulation *and* other 'body language' cues. e.g. facial expression (Worry / fear / concern).

Ultimately, looking at the original account we can conclude that 'experientially pre-conditioned' monkeys (adult mammal brains which had experience of a negative sensory stimulus associated to the control object) could and would influence other monkey's who had not experienced the negative stimulus.

They would do this through emotional and physical expression of care, compassion and concern based in fear.

Through such an inter-sensory transfer of emotion, behaviours and opinions evolve that are inherited by the group over time. This holds true for monkeys and mankind.

The *interesting* thing however, the message within the message, is that 'people' exaggerate the story (lie about the facts) for effect!

This is no different to consultants claiming that the 'tools' of 'TPS' (Toyota production system) are the 'one-size fits all solution' to business development needs or that 'Toyota causes dozens of deaths due to unintended acceleration'.

There is no smoke without fire, but that doesn't mean we should accept the smoke and ignore the cause of the fire just because the reality behind the hype is usually a little more mundane .. and guess what? Mundane / Normal ... doesn't 'SELL' in a capitalist / Keynesian economy!

The actual account of the Toyota claim was this; one accident occurred in which a Californian woman was hospitalised with reported injuries to her feet (not to detract from this or suggest this is mundane in any way for those it effected directly).

However, it has since been proven to have been caused by a failure to brake due to the dealership fitting the wrong sized dust-mat in the foot-well, which jammed the brake pedal. This is much more 'mundane' than 'Toyota', lauded as the highest quality capable company in the world for the last 70yrs having built in an inherent design flaw to their acceleration mechanisms.

There is and was no inherent design fault at all, merely a car rental receptionist who didn't pass on a concern from a previous customer about the over-sized mat in the hire vehicle! (See the LMJ – Lean Management Journal, May-June edition 2011 for the full account). Maybe she just didn't care .. and that's the crux of it all – people and how they are 'Being' in and of themselves and how much they care for others or the outcome of their actions ...vs. how engaged they can remain in a dull, repetitive environment.

But back to the point ... the exaggeration of stories, monkeys or crashes, happens for reasons of self-gratification (satisfaction of our own confirmation-bias / self-definition / self-esteem), which results in some individuals publicly stating the 'inherent design fault led to a number of deaths' etc.



Q2. Why *do* people position and present a principle, a story, a method, an approach or their own beliefs (e.g. business best practice / car crash), such that they rely on exaggeration to transfer meaning to others?

Is it to benefit others, out of our care, compassion, concern and fear for our fellow man (as a mammal like a Rhesus monkey), or is it on the *pretence* of providing benefit to others as a vehicle for our own benefit? (acceptance / approval / **acquisition**).

4 Drive Theory

To help further 'frame' the problem, I want to reference Lawrence and Nohria's 4 Drive Theory, which neatly considers evolutionary biology to explain human motivation.

Following extensive research across many years, these professors found the complexities of human motivation can be considered as relative to 4 primary drives;

Drive 1 – to Acquire

Drive 2 – to Bond

Drive 3 – to Learn

Drive 4 – to Defend

Considering Seligman [dogs] and Stevenson [Monkeys] and also making reference to the 4 Drive theory, we might consider '*Human Choice*' as follows

Opt. 1. Adult mammals (People) will choose to 'Defend' (D4) others and teach them so they can 'Learn' (D3) what is considered 'Good' (What is the socio-cultural norm, considered 'good' / of benefit). They will do this where they have formed a 'Bond' (D2) with those others and wish to help them Acquire (D1) for the benefit of themselves / the group e.g. When Parenting a child / employing an apprentice.

OR

Opt. 2. People will 'Learn' (D3) what can be gained personally from their own actions; they will choose to 'Defend' (D4) self, 'Acquire' (D1) for themselves and 'Bond' (D2) with others who can complement their drive to 'Acquire' / Bond / Learn'. (& tell stories of 'goodness' to attain advantage for self – e.g. 'Lean is best practice, removing defined wastes and controlling variation to improve efficiency') e.g. When consulting / selling / as a business.

In either case (serving others vs. serving self), the 'cultural norms' that are accepted as being 'Good' / 'of Value' are passed down through '**Relationships**' and become accepted on a broad social (generational) scale. Such 'Truth's' (Potency from Tiger Whiskey / Shark fin soup / Keynesian economics is 'good'), are commonly passed on through direct contact with other's, through the media, popular books, conferences / seminars etc. As can be seen when considering the Sunday Times article and related response from a member of the public.

Exaggerating the case for 'Goodness' / 'Badness', as I've tried to show with the examples above, is a self serving mechanism, designed to increase the capacity to (D1) Acquire, (D2) Bond, (D3) Learn, (D4) Defend in a complex social framework.

Accepting this at a social / systemic level, is a result of 'Learned Helplessness'. We've learned we can't influence or stop 'the machine'; regardless of the pain it causes us, we don't step outside of the box and off the electric plate, we don't even press the lever.

Next to Fiske's 'Cultural Skills', it seems to me these 4 drives are nothing short of profound when considering them against the latest discoveries being made about the mechanisms within the brain and a model too powerful and important to ignore in the world of leadership.

There are no birds in last years nest:

There is a tendency for the adult mammalian brain to inherit beliefs, form opinions and act / behave, in any given environment relative to it's own historic sensory stimulus, initially experienced by self, or significantly, experienced by others and inferred to self. (Imprinting – pre-disposed to the influence of the genetic infrastructure of the brain and external influence).

It serves us to make such 'assumptions' and 'inherit beliefs' as it not only saves time and the effort of personal discovery, but at a biological level reduces the glucose energy consumption rate of the brain. This is a good thing, because the brain is the most energy thirsty organ in the human body / system. (Explained in more detail in part 3).

Given the latest advances and evidence in Neuroscience (Gould 2008), it is almost certain that the same principles demonstrated through dog and monkey experiments apply to adult mammalian 'human' brains.

Given these foundational biological and neurological similarities, it is not surprising that social studies find people naturally acting toward their fellow man, given the right conditions, just like the Rhesus monkeys, 1st in defence of self, and as long as they are then 'safe' (comfortable / confident in their beliefs / worldview), on behalf of others. Unfortunately, where people 'perceive' a lack of 'Safety' (a broad church in psychological terms) we find, more often than not, people act in their own, and immediate self-interest.

Inheriting belief, making assumptions (reacting to neural short-cuts in defence of self at a physical / local / biological level), suffering learned helplessness etc. are intrinsically human **and** animal states.

The 'key' to creating conditions in which one is able to act on behalf of others people and other species, for the benefit of all (in the long term), is to address those issues, which provoke psychological perceptions of fear and stress vs. comfort and confidence. [This is where we need to understand the neurological mechanisms that sit behind such blanket terms as 'Fear / Stress / confidence' etc.]. In today's world, these are as much issues of our belief in economy and wealth as they are of physical safety from predators in the savannah.

To further complicate the situation, humans also have a representational capacity to visualise the past, present and future; to work at multiple levels of abstract symbolisation; and to exercise significant freedom of choice when motivated to 'Acquire / Bond / Learn / Defend'.

This adds an additional and incredibly important and potentially beneficial dimension. Our choices are significantly influenced by our emotions & thoughts (positive or negative) in addition to our environmental experiences which all combine to form our usually Subconscious perceptions of 'good' (Beliefs).

Our actions are based on what we believe, and subsequently, how we are 'being' toward ourselves and / or others (Defensive or receptive, inclusive or detached, positive or negative).

It is how we are 'being' which leads to what we are doing, as much as it is what we do (experience), which leads to how we are being. Thus our primary focal point when influencing change / developing leaders and others generally, must necessarily reside in developing thought patterns, emotion and attitude, themselves residing in the individuals philosophical beliefs about 'Good' / 'Bad', as a harmonious and complimentary element of any experience provided. At this level, we can realise we must challenge the current approach to pedagogy and parenting as much as we must challenge our approach to production and profit.

Unfortunately today, in ignorance of these connections and 'Root cause' issues, business best practice has evolved to address 'behaviours' as 'root cause', irrespective of the fact we cannot affect 'behaviours' unless we affect their 'root cause' (Thoughts / Beliefs). Behavioural 'root-cause' also happens to be the building blocks of [micro & macro] culture and yet 'Culture change' is also a growing 'Fad', being addressed without a sufficient depth of knowledge around social / emotional cause and effect.

Leaders today **must** recognise the immense importance of both emotion and cognition, which leads to individual 'Choice' and thus team performance, where individuals combine their attitudes and efforts.

The old way of thinking, 'last years nest', fails to understand the connectivity and 'relationship' between intellect and emotion. This see's leaders at corporate and political levels perpetuate so-called 'best-practice' through their own beliefs and related behaviours (Blaming the opposition etc.), which undermines overall performance in a multitude of ways.

It also see's those same leaders pursue change by methods and means that have no-chance of effecting change in beliefs. In ignorance of the depth of the challenge, they often take actions which reinforce those beliefs that need to change (political leaders are corrupt and are not serving the populous) ... in this way we effect little if any positive change to behaviours / actions in the masses, in practice.

We have plenty of evidence to show this is the case through the latest [UNEP](#) summary.

This is a key aspect to be considered when reviewing the extracts from Mehri's paper, which highlight 'behaviours' and 'social control' through fear. (detailed in Part 2).



Throwing Rocks or Birds

If I hold a rock, but want it to change, to be over there, I can simply throw it.

Knowing the weight of the rock, the speed at which it leaves my hand, and a few other variables, I can reliably predict both the path and the landing place of a rock.

But what happens if I substitute a [live] bird for the rock?

Knowing the weight of a bird and the speed of launch tells me nothing really about where the bird will land. No matter how much analysis I do in developing the launch plan ... the bird will follow the path it **chooses** and land where it **wants**.

Attributed to Richard Dawkins (Plsek, 2001):

Highlighted to me by Geoff Elliott

This is **the difference between 'Purpose' and 'Purposeful'** – we use the rock to serve our purpose but 'we' are purposeful, just like the bird, this is an observation that has led to other sayings like ...

“No Battle Plan survives its first encounter with the enemy”

(Clauswitz n.d.) **Carl Von Clauswitz**



The Cost of Control

Now, I think I've identified briefly above, how technology can benefit development and influence inherited opinion (belief) through providing 'New proof' that contradicts / evolves the previously held beliefs. However, with the onslaught of technological advances, used to 'control' larger and larger organisations, we make what is perhaps an understandable mistake.

We rely on technology to command and 'CONTROL' human' (socio-dynamic) *relationships* because it is supposedly 'efficient', as judged by the bounded measures we use (rooted in fiscal / logic / accounting practices) to report on our capacity to 'CONTROL' in business.

I say 'bounded', because these measures are only able to consider 'short-term' implications within a narrow [temporal] scope of concern (judged as 'good' when compared to predictions of financial outcomes only), and set as a 'pre-determined' target rather than seen as an emergent property of attitudes and actions.

i.e. Accountants cannot measure the fiscal impact of 'fear' based control mechanisms, therefore, accounting based measures necessarily have a bounded scope in a Socio-Techno Dynamic system.

We rely on this 'bounded' logic presented through technology to efficiently disseminate data, assuming this to be equal to 'effective communication'. This falls very short of being adequate in respect to 'Human Factors'. In our narrow economic / accounting based judgement of 'good', we ignore the 'emotional' and biological (feedback) communication needs of humans and the inefficiencies the use of 'logic' creates in practice.

E.g. Would it surprise us to find a Policy and well documented procedure in place at the Toyota dealers saying any issues reported by a customer with a hire vehicle will be reported back to the technicians? No, I'd personally assume this level of documentation (or process on a CRM system, to satisfy ISO9001 or similar quality standard), detailing the rules, factually and logically, by which people are expected to act, to be present in such an environment.

Did the receptionist act this way in practice – no! Because the technological presentation of fact is not effective communication and in this instance it caused a significant, if non-fatal crash.

The same principle can be considered when considering the 'Titanic'. The Radio men working for Marconi failed to pass on the iceberg warning, irrespective of 'policy'! They had been on shift for a long time, on low wages, they were tired, had received 6 other warnings of ice bergs in the previous hour or two and were stuck below decks with only a tube to speak to the bridge ... they didn't feel 'valued', became complacent and didn't warn of the danger leading to catastrophe. How they were 'being' (feeling / emotionally) dictated their actions, this wasn't considered in the design of the work. The 'Human Factors' were ignored and regardless of such catastrophic outcomes, continue to be ignored in most cases today. The trouble is, it won't just be a boat we drive into an iceberg if we carry on the way we are going, it will be the planet we drive to distraction!

In our over-reliance on fiscally oriented counting (judgement) mechanisms, used to serve our short-term purpose, we are pre-disposed to ignore the complexities and implications of dealing with purposeful people (and our impact on nature) in the long term. There are a number of direct conflicts between such 'Short-term vs. long-term' outcome requirements. Fiscal 'Good' doesn't automatically equate to social 'good' and a lack of social goodness, ultimately detracts from the capacity to realise fiscal, social or biological goodness. The challenge is to '**Find the Balance**'.

Currently we construct control mechanisms (computer controlled data capture, output and analysis) and with these mechanisms, we treat people like rocks. We develop battle plans that define a trajectory and expect people to land where we systematically throw them.

We forget that when purposeful people are thrown or pushed, if their 'purpose, does not 'align' with the supervisors, managers, executives, organisational, political or cultural purpose – people (internal or external customers) eventually push back!

And in often-case *start throwing stones*.

Summarising the danger!

Whether we 'act' on behalf of others *or* ourselves, treat people as rocks or birds, we can succumb to false beliefs, inherited over time as fact.

The danger is, the belief in what is 'Good' can be 'False' and thus, through books, seminar's etc. we perpetuate opinion that is not 'Good', when considered from *outside* the boundary of the 'Socio-Technical System' we are acting *within*.

In organisations, this can occur in different cultural layers, seeing different 'beliefs' affect behavioural norms and reactions that conflict across those layers, dramatically inhibiting organisational progress and profit from the inside. (This hints at the depth of the word 'alignment').

On a broader scale this can see global distinction issues ignored in favour of immediate perceptions of comfort.

If we combine the 'essence' of the messages from Stevenson and Seligman, we might accept that;

The capacity of an individual, team, company or society, to make progress, is negatively impacted when faced with a set of prevailing conditions, which confirm;

- 1. Any independent (original / innovative) thoughts and subsequent actions, are 'unable' to effect outcomes (Like the dogs) and**
- 2. Any innovative thought or relative action attempted, is considered bad / unacceptable at a social level for largely forgotten / unidentifiable / historic reasons. (Like the monkeys) and**
- 3. Relying on inert (technical / logical / fiscal) systems to 'CONTROL' is adequate when dealing with people. (Throwing birds as if they are rocks).**

The icing on the 'Danger' cake.

People read books and go to seminars that they are *interested in*. They copy best practice in a current culture which determines good, because it creates comfort and require less effort than thinking for oneself.

We do not attend seminars or read books or accounts of the world that challenge our own world-view, we avoid facing up to the 'big-issues', just as we wouldn't choose to expose ourselves to a 'Hiss' in the grass we couldn't see or understand ... anything 'new' / 'unknown' is challenging / a threat and thus 'guilty until proven innocent'. 'New' provokes a fear-based reaction. In our primal self-defence we are pre-conditioned to avoid / retract / deny and dismiss any such 'threatening' idea or approach, as invalid, to retain comfort, expending less neural energy.

In this way we ensure that all our efforts to change from within the systems we automatically accept as valid only serve to perpetuate the conditions we bemoan.

Learning

We go to great lengths and effort to develop technologies and design our environment such that our perceptions of 'threat' are reduced.

i.e. It's safer and easier to confirm ourselves as right through our pre-conditioned / imprinted beliefs about the world around us and ourselves... but,

This attitude ensures we fail to challenge what we consider 'good' and we subsequently create conditions, which encourage us to ignore the aspects of 'good' that may be 'bad' for us when considered in more detail.

e.g. Control mechanisms used in large organisations of people can often create conditions in which levels of stress are elevated (Chronic stress). When stress levels are raised, there are negative physiological and neurological consequences ... this is 'Bad' in conditions perceived as 'good' ... but more on this later in part 3.

By systematically exposing ourselves only to those learning's that pervade our own scope of interest / sectors (Speakers speaking on their own subject from which they get their own rewards from within their own market etc.), we miss the opportunity to cross-fertilise knowledge – for example, between Neuroscience, Psychology, control systems and methods to control quality in a business.

In this way, we rarely make 'step-changes' to the beliefs underpinning our 'knowledge' and behaviours, individually, as teams, organisations, regions or nations. Any change that happens at all is a long drawn out evolutionary process which requires a change in 'belief' about what is 'Good' / 'of benefit'. We rarely, if ever, address our philosophical definitions of 'Good' that all our subsequent behaviours hinge upon.

In simple terms – We can only learn, relative to what we've already learned.

In support of these observations, the following link is a '**must see**' video that helps to explain the way humans 'frame' every subsequent experience they have, to fit their prior beliefs (deep imprinting from primary experience).

Produced by the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics

<http://www.learner.org/resources/series28.html?pop=yes&pid=9>

*Hover over the little VoD symbol (top right hand corner of the bottom white text box) and click to be taken to the video presented by Annenberg Learner. Thanks go to Randy Schenkat for sharing this link.

DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL YOU HAVE WATCHED THE VIDEO.

For anyone suffering the same misconceptions, follow this link.

http://www.moonconnection.com/moon_phases.phtml

The Big Issue?

This is the situation we find ourselves in today!

These principles impact life in a multitude of environments, but especially in respect to ‘what really works in practice’ for commercial entities and other complex socio-technical systems, like the business, education and political systems we surround ourselves with. It is these systems and methods of ‘life’ we’ve created that conflict with the ‘balance’ required in the natural world.

Part 1. Summary

For decades consultants and business leaders alike have handed down principles described through stories and accounts of actions taken by others, which have become increasingly less ‘factual’ over time (Like the 5 Monkey story).

Such providers of exaggerated accounts have become complicit in the effective corruption of ‘best-practice’, largely *because* they are rewarded for their compliance in a world that **anticipates** and **expects** ‘norms’ to be perpetuated.

(Anticipation / Expectation (the seeking mechanism - Mesolimbic pathway):

A Neuropsychological mechanism that compliments defence-mechanisms to reduce neural energy consumption requirements and trigger ‘emotional reward’ at a neurotransmitter level – i.e. dopamine hits opiate receptors while we’re ‘seeking’ [problem solving / finding solutions].

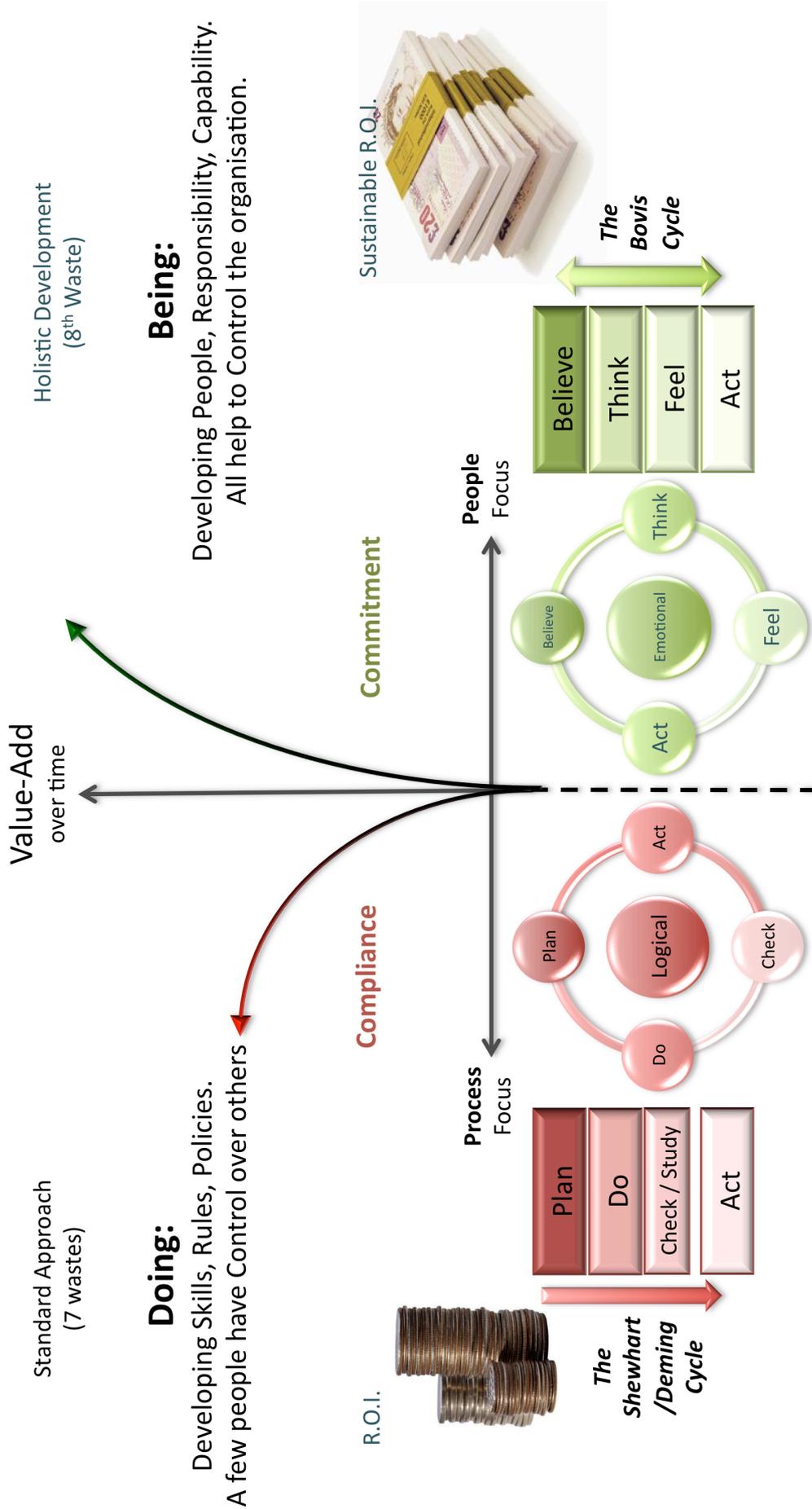
This neural reward mechanism is turned off when we ‘find’ what we’re looking for / find the solution – giving us a neural view of old sayings, “it’s the journey rather than the destination” – once we ‘achieve’ something, we often feel empty – this is due to a lack of opiate stimulus – so in many cases it’s of benefit for the human brain to avoid digging too deep and finding answers, so as to avoid neuro-chemically stimulated perceptions of reduced satisfaction / disappointment that might be realised if we were to challenge what we’ve become accustomed to – where consistency = comfort ... ‘congruence leads to confidence’ ... new is a threat).

Today, the vast majority of people at work accept the presented accounts of ‘Good’ and ‘Fact’, largely because it’s neurologically and psychologically convenient to do so. **People have stopped ‘Thinking’ for themselves**, or challenging their current conditions, just like the monkeys and the dogs.

This has especially been the case over the last 40 years of Quality Circles, TQM, WCM, Lean, Agile, OpEx, Six Sigma etc. which are presented as ‘The Solution’.

In a culturally approved state of efficiency, perceived to be attained through compliance, the issue we fail to consider is the positive or negative impact of ‘efficiency through compliance’ itself, to the detriment of sustainability, commitment and other ‘human / cultural’ issues.

See diagram on the next page.



Finding the Balance©

To help us understand the origins and misinterpretations / assumptions built into today's perceptions of 'Best-Practice', in part 2 I will make reference to Darius Mehri's "**The Darker side of Toyota.**"

This is a paper used to help demonstrate the depths of the issues we face. It was a paper published by 'The Academy for Management' in 2006 based on Darius Mehri's book; Notes from Toyota-Land: An American Engineer in Japan

An ILR Press book published by Cornell University Press.
Copyright © 2005 by Cornell University.

Mehri: Is an American simulation engineer who worked in Japan for a Toyota group company. He was able to talk openly to the employees in various sections and at various levels in and around Toyota in Japan. Mehri paints a very different picture of TPS than the one typically presented, encouraged & accepted in the west over the last 40yrs and his account confirmed a significant conflict I'd previously been unable to explain.

Permissions

Darius Mehri has kindly given me permission to reference extracts from his book.

Prof. Nohria, [Now Dean at Harvard] has also kindly given me permission to reference 4 Drive Theory.

If you want your approach to leadership and thus your organisation to move beyond the standards set by an evolving past, contact David for leadership development and support on drbovis@duxinaroe.com or on 07793276015.

"The Limit of my language means the limit of my world"

Ludwig Wittgenstein

ADDENDUM

Toyota's - 14 management principles

1. Base your management decisions on a long term philosophy, even at the expense of short term financial goals.
2. Create continuous process flow to bring problems to the surface.
3. Use "pull" systems to avoid overproduction.
4. Level out workload (heijunka).
5. Build a culture of stopping to fix problems, to get quality right the first time.
6. Standardized tasks are the foundation for continuous improvement and employee empowerment
7. Use visual control so no problems are hidden.
8. Use only reliable thoroughly tested technology that serves your people and processes.
9. Grow leaders who thoroughly understand the work, live the philosophy, and teach it to others
10. Develop exceptional people and teams who follow your company's philosophy
11. Respect you extended network of partners and suppliers by challenging them improve.
12. Go and see for yourself to thoroughly understand the situation.
13. Make decisions slowly by consensus, thoroughly considering all options; implement decisions rapidly
14. Become a learning organization through relentless reflection (hansei) and continuous improvement (kaizen)

Relative to The Toyota Way

1. Long Term Philosophy - Principle 1
 2. Right process = right results - Principles 2-8
 3. Add value by developing your people and partners - Principles 9-11
 4. Continuously solve root cause Problems - Principles 12-14
-

Bibliography

- Gould, Elizabeth. RSA Events. 11 2008. 10 2010
<<http://www.thersa.org/events/video/archive/elizabeth-gould>>.
- Lawrence, P. R., & Nohria, N. PAEI - Structures of concern. 2002. 2011
<<http://paei.wikidot.com/lawrence-nohria-four-drive-theory-of-human-nature>>.
- Maier, Seligman and. Learned Helplessness. ** ** 1967. 5 May 2009
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Learned_helplessness>.
- Mehri, Darius. Notes from Toyota-Land: An American Engineer in Japan. 1 Sept 2005. 03 Jan 2012
<<http://www.amazon.com/Notes-Toyota-Land-American-Engineer-Japan/dp/0801442893>>.
- Peter, Laurence J. Wikipedia. 10 Aug 1968. 23 Jan 2012
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laurence_J._Peter>.
- Stevenson. Did the monkey water spray experiment ever take place. 1967. Jan 2012
<http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Did_the_monkey_banana_and_water_spray_experiment_ever_take_place>.

Other References.

- Individuals go through a reaction process when they are personally confronted with major organisational change (Jacobs, 1995; Kyle, 1993).
- According to Scott and Jaffe (1988) this process consists of four phases: initial denial, resistance, gradual exploration, and eventual commitment.
- Unconscious processes arise as individuals respond to the threats of change (Halton, 1994; O'Connor, 1993).
- Individuals unconsciously use well-developed and habitual defence mechanisms to protect themselves from change and from the feelings of anxiety change causes (Oldham and Kleiner, 1990; de Board, 1978).
- These defences can sometimes obstruct and hinder an individual from adapting to change (Halton, 1994).
- Resistance is a natural part of the change process and is to be expected (Coghlan, 1993; Steinburg, 1992; Zaltman and Duncan, 1977).
- Resistance occurs because change involves going from the known to the unknown (Coghlan, 1993; Steinburg, 1992; Myers and Robbins, 1991; Nadler, 1981).
- Typically, individuals seek a comfortable level of arousal and stimulation and try to maintain that state (Nadler, 1981; Zaltman and Duncan, 1977).
- Individuals differ in terms of their ability and willingness to adapt to organisational change (Darling, 1993). This is because individuals experience change in different ways (Carnall, 1986).
- Some people tend to move through the change process rather quickly, while others may become stuck or experience multiple transitions (Scott and Jaffe, 1988).
- The failure of many large-scale corporate change programs can be traced directly to employee resistance (Maurer, 1997; Spiker and Lesser, 1995; Regar et al., 1994; Martin, 1975).
- A longitudinal study conducted by Waldersee and Griffiths (1997) of 500 large Australian organisations during 1993 and 1996 revealed that employee resistance was the most frequently cited implementation problem encountered by management when introducing change.
- Over half the organisations surveyed experienced employee resistance. These findings raise questions about how effectively the resistance phase is managed when implementing change.
- Managing employee resistance is a major challenge for the initiators of change, and according to O'Connor (1993) outweighs any other aspect of the change process.

- Over 60% of change efforts fail
 - McKinsey Quarterly 2006 & 2008
- Change initiatives fail 70% of the time
 - Miller 2002
- 64% failure rate in municipal public service programs
 - Yin 1978
- Major corporate investments are abandoned within six months, 80 per cent of the time
 - Gartner Group 2002
- 75% of change efforts fail completely or threaten the survival of the company when neglecting culture
 - Cameron & Quinn 1999
- Most change programs fail, but the odds of success can be greatly improved by taking into account counterintuitive insights about how employees interpret their environment and choose to act
 - McKinsey 'The irrational side of management' 2009
- "83% of all mergers and acquisitions (M&A's) failed to produce any benefit for the shareholders and over half actually destroyed value"
 - KPMG 1999
- Interviews of over 100 senior executives involved in 700 deals over a two-year period revealed that the overwhelming cause for failure "is the people and the cultural differences".
 - KPMG 1999
- Experts say that organisational culture is formed from between 80% and 90% of employee behaviour, determined by the way leaders address ... what the organisation attends to, measures, rewards and

controls; critical incidents and the approach to role modelling and coaching actions.
- Human Capital Institute & Towers Perrin joint white paper 2007

- The greatest barrier to successful integration is cultural incompatibility. Undervaluing or ignoring the human dynamics related to an M&A transaction can prompt the departure of key talent... among the assets that made the acquisition attractive...
- Author of 'Done Deal' Beth Page 2006
- Post-M&A organisational cultural change is a traumatic experience for organisational members. It generates resistance and contributes to M&A failure.
- Manchester Business School 2007
- A study of 100 companies with failed or troubled mergers, 85% of the executives polled said that differences in management style and practices were the major problem.
- Coopers & Lybrand 1992
- Surveyed executives involved in a number of acquisitions concluded, "The major factor in failure was the underestimation of difficulties of merging two cultures".
- British Institute of Management 1996
- Kotter and Heskett's landmark study, 'Corporate Culture and Performance,' documents results for 207 large U.S. companies in 22 different industries over an eleven-year period. Kotter and Heskett reported that companies that managed their cultures well saw revenue increases of 682% versus 166% for the companies that did not manage their cultures well; stock price increases of 901% versus 74%; and net income increases of 756% versus 1%
- Denison's research of 34 large American firms, one of the most frequently cited studies of culture & performance, found that companies with a participative culture reap a ROI that averages nearly twice as high as those in firms with less efficient cultures. Denison's study provides hard evidence that the cultural and behavioural aspect of organisations are intimately linked to both short-term and long-term survival
- The top five performing stocks from 1972 to 1992 witnessed growth from 15,689% to 21,775%. Yet during this period, these industries as a whole performed very poorly. These five firms cite their sustained advantage did not rely on technology, patents, or strategic proposition, but rather on how they managed their workforce
- According to Pfeffer's research, companies that manage people right will outperform companies that don't by 30% to 40%
- The Corporate leadership council reported in 2006 that engaged organisations grew profits as much as three times faster than their competitors. Highly engaged organisations reduced staff turnover by 87% and improved performance by 20%
- Companies in the 'Best companies to work for' table in the period 04-08 increased T/O by 94% & profits by 315%
- From the 2009 Report to Government on Employee Engagement by David McLeod & Nita Clarke:
"Those Companies with a highly engaged workforce improved operating income by 19.2% over a period of 12 months, whilst those companies with low engagement scores saw operating income decline by 32.7% over the same period"

"Over a 12month period, those companies with high engagement scores demonstrated a 13.7% improvement in net income growth whilst those with low engagement saw net income growth decline by 3.8%"

The Chartered Management institute 'Quality of Working Life 2007 Research Programme' found a significant association and influence between employee engagement and innovation

A 2009 Watson Wyatt study of 115 companies indicated that a company with highly engaged employees achieves a financial performance four times greater than companies with poor engagement

They also reported that the highly engaged are more than twice as likely to be top performers - almost 60% of them exceed or far exceed expectations for performance

Moreover the highly-engaged missed 43% fewer days of work due to illness.

Today – we can explain all of these statistics with the depth and rigour required, allowing us as leaders, to know how we have to be and what we have to do to improve them.

There are no more excuses, no 'system' to blame – we have the knowledge and therefore the choice to change ourselves as the leaders of those who will follow us – will you?