MANAGEMENT GURU

by

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DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in this study has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification in this or any university or other institution of learning.

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Management Ideas Poem

by

Paul Holland

With Herzberg, Mintzberg and Mr Argyle
I'm desperately trying to develop a style
But will I ever get the chance to Schein
Often I feel I'm in de Klein

I'm looking for a Handy solution I shout
But as soon as I'm interested it just Peters out
I've looked everywhere (at Fiedler on the roof and
Maslower down)
Till I'm Reddin the face and begin to frown

I'm not as Jung as I used to be (keep it quiet)
But Freud egg and Drucker l'Orange are not my diet
Even in Tescos during Shoppenhausers
They Kant stop talking about the brain's mystical powers

I've looked at TA and got my fingers Berned
My cross-transactions have Vroom for improvement -
so I learned
Without Fayol when I'm counselled I just get a Block
I get de Board feeling so easily I never take stock

Learning styles may have helped me (but I lied)
However, I discovered, "Honey, it's Kolb outside"
My search has been rewarded (partial I'd admit)
When asked for my opinion I say it's all Tannenbaum and
Schmidt

I'm sorry if the above doesn't scan
But I'm afraid I missed the meter man

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis considers how the reader can become a management guru. To this end, it examines the history of management ideas in the period 1890-1990, and identifies those which have achieved widespread popularity. A management idea is the generic term used to refer to any research finding, theory, concept, framework or prescription that maintains currency within the world of management and management education and training.

The thesis accounts for the popularity of these ideas. It argues that four sets of factors contribute to the establishment of the popularity of a management idea. First, the idea has to be timely, that is, in tune with social, economic and political concerns of the period. Second, it has to achieve a high level of visibility in order to gain managers' awareness of its existence. Third, it should address the relatively stable and enduring set of managerial needs. Fourth, the idea should, in its content and design, be perceived by the managers as capable of fulfilling those needs.

Five literature reviews were carried out. The first identified the six most popular management idea "families". The second was a historical review of the social, economic and political factors which formed the historical milieus from which these idea families evolved. The third literature review uncovered twelve recurring features of these popular management ideas. The fourth examined managers' needs for such ideas, and the fifth examined how management ideas were marketed by companies and consultants.

These literature reviews produced a set of hypotheses, some of which were tested in the empirical part of the study. These related primarily to the link between management needs and the characteristics of the ideas themselves. Both business school academics' and managers' reactions to different management ideas were assessed from a phenomenological perspective. This utilised self-completed questionnaires and the analysis of interview transcripts.

The research conclusions are that the popularity of a management idea can both be predicted and planned for by enterprising and aspiring management gurus, be they business school faculty or management consultants*. The application of the principles described in this thesis should secure for them, both fame and fortune.

* Throughout this thesis, masculine pronouns have been used for succinctness and are intended to refer both to males and females. The lack of female management gurus offers great opportunities for the business school academics and consultants of this sex.

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SUMMARY

The objective of this research was to discover why certain management ideas have achieved widespread popularity and have brought fame and fortune to their writers, while others have not. Those authors who have achieved such celebrity have had their ideas taught in business schools and on in-company seminars. They are discussed in the books and journal articles of other writers. Sections of their writings appear in books of readings. Such a degree of continuing exposure is not limited just to when the author is alive. Their ideas continue to flourish after their deaths. Hence, these management writers have achieved fame during their lives, and immortality after it.

Fortune refers to the income that these writers can expect to earn from the sale of their ideas. The income flow comes in the form of royalties from their books, from sales of audio and video cassettes, workbooks and associated training materials. Most spectacularly, it can come from personal appearance fees at conferences and company seminars. In 1987, Tom Peters was rumoured to be charging $25,000 per presentation, and Rosabeth Moss Kanter's consultancy fee was $17,000 per hour.

The thesis does not address itself to the question of the application of management ideas. Many, but not all, of the popular ideas to be discussed have altered the way that managers do things and the way in which their organizations work. However, while this is acknowledged, the thesis limits itself to understanding the popularity of a management idea as evidenced by the frequency of its communication and citation, and the recognition (both financial and in status) that is given to its developers or promoters.

The thesis argues that for a management idea to secure fame, fortune and immortality for its writer, it has to meet four pre-requisites. First, the idea has to be timely. That is, it should address itself to the problems of the age. In the early years of this century, scientific management offered solutions to the problems of organizing large groups of immigrant workers in the United States. At the end of the century, the excellence literature provided ideas to enable the West to counter the Japanese industrial challenge.

Second, a timely idea may fail to achieve popular acclaim because its potential audience are not aware of it. Ideas do not promote themselves. They have to be brought to the attention of users. In this context, business school academics and management consultancies play an important role in the dissemination of the ideas.

Third, although timely and visible, and idea may fail to address organizational concerns in a way that meets the individual needs and concerns of the managers at whom it is addressed. Fourth, while it may be timely, visible, and focused on managerial needs, it may lack the essential ingredients which allow potential users to perceive it as relevant to meeting their needs.

In explaining the phenomenon of how only a small fraction of all the management ideas developed over the last eighty or so years have managed to achieve popular status, one can use the analogy of the filter funnel. As the available management ideas are tipped in at the top, they flow down through ever finer filters. These filters have labels such as timeliness, visibility, need relevance and design features. The majority of the management ideas fail to pass, and get filtered out. Only a very small number pass through the filter funnel and re-emerge at the other end as popular management ideas.
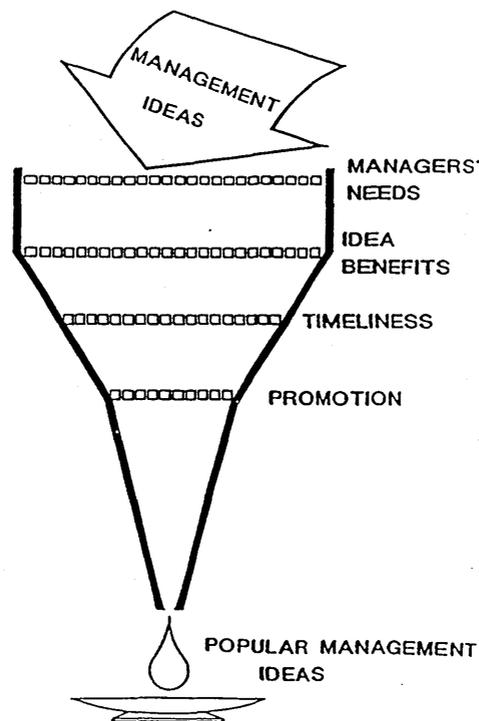
This research is based on an analysis of acknowledged popular management ideas. As a result of this research, it is hoped that readers will be in a position to engage in detailed planning of management ideas prior to launching them onto the market. The outcome of this should be to maximise their chances of international success, fame and fortune.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The writer's interest in this topic was awakened in two ways. First, from the start of his career as a management academic, he had a facination with the choice of ideas that were presented on management courses, and the way in which these were taught. Amongst the observations that he made was that a very limited range of ideas were taught on introductory management courses. He saw that attempts by lecturers to teach different, often more up-to-date and complex ideas, were greeted with complaints from students. Frequently this led to lecturers abandoning their attempts at innovation and going back to the teaching of the tried and tested management ideas in their field or discipline. It appeared that there was some sort of core of acceptable material which managers and management students considered to be valuable and to which they reacted positively. Which were these ideas and why did managers and management students find them so attractive?

A second stimulus came from discussions with management lecturers. They commented on the ease and difficulty of teaching certain subjects but not others. Motivation as topic was considered "easy" but systems theory was "hard". Particular topics were preferred to others on the basis of their "teach-ability". It became clear that these lecturers, in deciding what to teach and what not to teach, were exerting a gatekeeping role in relation to the knowledge that they introduced to their management students. On what basis did they make such decisions?

Most recently, the writer realized that a small number of management commentators were attaining guru status. Their books sold in their thousands and even millions, royalties flowed in, and their ideas were merchandised in audio and video cassettes. The appearance money that they charged to make presentations at conferences and on in-company programmes matched that of film, television and pop stars. Apart from a personal interest in how to

participate in such largesse, the writer was facinated to discover how certain management ideas could be so attractive and bring such high rewards to those who developed and presented them.

Finally, in considering this subject over the years, the writer became aware of a number of curiosities about the management guru phenomenon in general, and about the nature of the management ideas themselves in particular. In reading around the subject, he observed that other commentators working outside of the field of management education, were also conscious of a similar phenomenon. Many years ago, John Dryden said that a "falsehood once received from a famed writer becomes traditional to posterity". Since then, other authors have commented that the truth or falsehood of an idea was one thing, but that its acceptance and dissemination was another (Gellner, 1985); that there was no apparant correlation between the significance of an idea and its popularity (Butler, 1986); that what was said had always been less important than how it was said (Mikes, 1984); that ideas received acclaim not because they were true, but because they were interesting (Davis, 1971); and that a lie well told was better than the truth garbled.

ASSUMPTIONS TO BE TESTED

The 1980s generated a great interest in management ideas and gurus. Certain ideas, such as those of Herzberg (1959), continue to be popular even after other writers had demonstrated flaws in the research methods and challenged their findings. For example, the notion of projection became popular and argued about, only after people tried to replicate Herzberg's research. Thus, in the case of theories, despite the fact that newer and methodologically sounder ones became available, the popularity and discussion of older ones like Maslow's (1943), McGregor's (1960) or Likert's (1961) was not diminished. While academics may criticise these writers, their ideas continue to have a profound effect on management teaching and possible also on management practice.

The developers of these management ideas have also enjoyed popularity. The British and American business press have had a long standing facination with the management gurus or sages. At least once a year a magazine such as **Management Today** will carry an article, or even a series or articles, on this theme. Examples of such contributions have appeared in the **Financial Times** (1986), **Business Week** (Byrne, 1986), and **Business** (1988).

The starting point of the research was the hypothesis that there were certain recurring and hence predictable elements in the small number of the most popular management ideas that explained their popularity. The study sought to identify whether this was in fact the case.

The subject field which most closely addresses itself to the research question as outlined above is that of the sociology of ideas which is a sub-set of the sociology of knowledge. This is because this discipline seeks to explain why people hold the ideas that they do, and examines how far such ideas can be accounted for by reference to social factors present at the time. The sociology of knowledge relates patterns of thought to social situations.

The earliest writings in the field of the sociology of knowledge were by Marx and Mannheim. It is not intended to examine the background or history of this sub-discipline in any depth. How does one study modes of thought? Mannheim (1960) argued that we needed to grasp the "documentary meaning". This involved presenting a description of the set of ideas; accounting for the motives of the people involved; and explaining the social and historical context in which those ideas developed and took root.

It is sufficient to highlight two writings on this theme. First, Bendix (1963) took a theory of ideology perspective when he examined Marx's proposition that sets of ideas were used by groups to advance their material interests. It has been argued, for example, that one of the reasons for the popularity and development of Elton Mayo's Human Relations was that it could be used by managers to justify their authority in the workplace. It provided them with the justification that management was attending to employees' needs for psychologically satisfying work experiences. Bendix demonstrated that the promotion of human relations views was associated with higher levels of bureaucratization.

An example within the field of the sociology of knowledge which is particularly pertinant to this thesis is that of the **sociology of the interesting**. Davis (1971) offered an explanation of how certain social science theories which were deemed to be "interesting" differed from those which he considered to be "non-interesting". Davis distinguished his approach to the field of the sociology of knowledge from that of Mannheim. He considered Mannheim's concern to be with the study of belief systems and assumptions. While it did study the historical succession of ideas, such belief systems were treated by Mannheim as static phenomena. Their historical succession was viewed from the standpoint of one static ideology being replaced by another static ideology. In contrast, Davis' approach to the sociology of knowledge (or the "sociology of the interesting" as he termed it) had a more dynamic orientation. It was concerned with the study of the breakdown and build up of beliefs, and the transformation of assumptions. It also concerned itself with the discovery of the sociological and phenomenological mechanisms of change.

The writings mentioned in this section represent the boundaries within which this writer has located his research question. Management theorists appear to have been reluctant to take a reflective stance with respect to the theories and frameworks that they teach to their students and managers. Weiss and Miller (1987) wrote that in the decades since Bendix's book was published, there had been no rush to further his examination of the social bases of ideas, and the usefulness of such ideas to particular groups. Davis himself concluded his article by exhorting its readers to make the process of the generation of interesting theories, as much the object of attention and research, as the verification of insipid ones. This thesis picks up both challenges.

NEED FOR STUDY

Any piece of research starts with its writer's personal interest. However, that private interest needs to be matched by a wider relevence for both the individual reader and a wider audience. Readers may have a financial interest in this topic since it will identify how they can market their private

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consultancy services or courses most effectively. More generally, this study suggests the form which management knowledge needs to take if it is to be considered valuable by the managers at whom it is directed.

This research seeks to make a contribution to three related areas. These are management practice, the theory of the sociology of knowledge, and to the development of research methodology. First, the practical contribution of this research is to identify the forms which knowledge about managerial behaviour and organizational functioning needs to take, if it is to gain the attention of managers, generate an interest in them, and move them to apply it. Put in slightly different terms, the research shows management consultants and lecturers how best to package their management ideas so as to maximise their chances of successfully selling them to organizational customers.

Second, the research contributes to the sociology of knowledge as broadly defined. The popular literature about management gurus has anecdotally and intermittantly referred to aspects of management ideas which give them "manager - appeal". However, it has neither provided an in-depth systematic analysis of their common features, nor offered any supporting evidence for the claims that have been made. This study will seek to overcome both of these deficiencies.

Third, this thesis seeks to make a contribution to the development of qualitative research approaches, especially those based upon phenomenological ideas. It is intended to use phenomenologically-based questionnaires and protocol analysis as the main data collection methods. The research focuses on the field of management. However, it avoids the broad issue of the circumstances under which managerially-relevent social science research enters the decision-making domain. The process of using research findings and ideas stretches along a continuum. At one end there is the direct application of research findings to a single problem, while at the other of the continuum there is a diffuse acquisition (or change) of understanding. This question of how the conclusions of academic management research succeed or fail to be applied to policy and strategic decisions is a separate research topic, and one which will not be addressed in this research. To summarise, what this study does attempt to do is:

(a) To identify the most popular management ideas
and their associated change prescriptions.

(b) To explain why these specific ideas are popular
while others are not.

RESEARCH APPROACH

How is one to identify the dominant modes of management thought for investigation, and how should they be studied? The founding fathers of the discipline mentioned earlier have provided guidelines.

First, however, there is the need to identify the popular management ideas to be studied. Davis (1971) examined a number of famous social science (mainly sociological) theories. From an analysis of these, he produced a systematic index of propositional forms that interesting and non-interesting theories took. He wrote that his "index of the interesting" was not definitive, and that the collection and categorization of interesting propositions needed further refinement. He recommended a more sophisticated method of identifying interesting propositions in any given field of social science. He suggested surveying academics and practitioners in the field, and asking them to name their favourite theories or authors. Additionally, he suggested content analysing professional journals, popular texts of selected readings or reprint series. These approaches have been combined in the research reported here in identifying the most popular management ideas for subsequent analysis.

Second, following the suggestions of Mannheim, the aim will be to grasp what he referred to as the "documentary meaning" of ideas. For each familiy of related ideas, the thesis will first provide a brief description and then an analysis. That analysis will identify the essential features of each management idea family.

Third, the management idea family will be placed within its historical context. Glover and Strawbridge (1985), distinguished what they called "strong" and "weak" programmes in the sociology of knowledge. They explained that "strong programmes" were these which sought to link all knowledge and beliefs (including management knowledge) to social conditions in a causal way. The interest here was on demonstrating how particular economic, social and political conditions brought about, or caused managers to hold or support particular ideas and beliefs. Such strong programmes made no distinction between true and false beliefs, or between reasonable and unreasonable ones.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis is divided into ten chapters. The first introduces the findings of the research, the need for it, and the research methods and design used.

Chapter 2:   Popular management ideas

Chapter 2 defines the concept of "popularity" and identifies the most popular management ideas of the last hundred years. These are grouped into six main families and are labelled bureaucracy, scientific management, administrative management, human relations, neo-human relations and guru writings. Evidence is provided to support the choice of these six schools.

Chapter 3:   Historical context

"Every idea has its time" is the theme of this chapter. Each popular idea can be seen as a reflection of its historical period. The author reviews the historical background of the six management schools identified in the previous chapter. The historical periods considered range from the 1900s

through to the 1980s. The argument in this chapter is that in order to achieve popularity, a management ideas must be introduced at a time when the social, economic and political factors are mosty sympathetic to it.

Chapter 4: Business school gatekeepers

Business school academics play a small, but nevertheless important, role in bringing management ideas to the attention of potential consumers. Little is known about what attracts business school academics to teach certain management ideas but not others. This chapter hypothesises a number of possible variables and evaluates these in relation to the six families of popular management ideas identified in Chapter 2. Five characteristics are hypothesised as contributing to the promotablity of an idea.

Chapter 5: Promotion of management ideas

A management idea does no sell itself, it is argued, even if it does contain all the desirable characteristics. The chapter suggests that a key element in the popularity of a management idea, lies in the application of marketing principles to the basic managerial ideas, and their transformation into a saleable product. Publishers and the authors themselves have superseded academics as the main promoters of management ideas. Their task is to raise the visibility of the product. By using marketing concepts such as branding, product life cycle, product development, and franchising, they have raised the visibility of the ideas in the eyes of consuming managers.

Chapter 6: Requirements of managers .

Chapter 6 considers the popular management ideas from the consuming managers' perspective. What do managers look for in a new idea? Management ideas are considered from the manager's perspective. The conclusion drawn is that in both these areas the requirements are similar. They can be considered under three main headings. These are the requirement for achieving predictability and control of a volatile

environment, and for the opportunity to increase status. These three managerial needs are discussed within a context of changing managerial images.

Chapter 7: Succession of management ideas and fads

Chapter 7 addresses itself to two questions. First, how do apparently competing ideas in management continue to co-exist, when in another discipline, old theories would be replaced by newer ones? Second, the chapter seeks to offer a more convincing explanation of the causes of the management fad phenomenon than has hitherto been available.

Chapter 8: Research design rationale

This chapter introduces and justifies the research design and methods used in the study. The chapter discusses the phenomenological philosophy and relates it to its allied methods. It contrasts it with the more commonly used positivistic research methods.

Chapter 9: Presentation and analysis of data

The chapter reports the findings from two questionnaire surveys and a set of in-depth interviews conducted with a small number of managers. The data are summarized and discussed, and conclusions drawn.

Chapter 10: Conclusions and suggestions for further research

The final chapter summarizes the findings of the study. Rather than repeating previously presented data, the material is presented in the form of a step guide for the aspiring management guru. Finally, the chapter suggests a number of directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

POPULAR MANAGEMENT IDEAS

Introduction
Nature of management ideas
Bureaucracy
Scientific management
Administrative management
Human relations
Neo-human relations
Guru theory
Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this century and particularly after the Second World War, only a very small proportion of published management ideas that have been propounded have achieved widespread popularity and managed to establish themselves in the history of management thought.

This chapter seeks to identify the most popular management ideas, and pinpoint which aspects of their content might explain their popularity. The popularity that is being explained is not a general one amongst the population at large, but that of a sub-population limited to business school academics and managers in Britain and the United States. This chapter has seven main propositions which are that:

1. It is possible through the analysis of publications and management academic surveys to identify sets or clusters ofrecurring management ideas.

2. It is necessary and possible to distinguish between the originators or formulators of management ideas and their subsequent disciples or idea-diffusers.

3. Popular management ideas are strongly practical and rarely address fundamental intellectual or sociological issues.

4. The popularity of management ideas is related to their **applicability** to the organizations or managers who pay for them through various forms of consultancy.

5. The popularity of management ideas is related to their ease of **understanding**.

6. The popularity of management ideas is related to the **legitimating** or taken-for-granted nature of management status and power within a capitalist society. Hence management ideas have capitalist, ideological and political dimensions.

7. The elements of management ideas singled out by critics of the same ideas are often those which can explain their popularity. That is, the dimension that appears problematic actually explains why managers are interested in it in the first place.

In seeking to support proposition one, the chapter identifies what are held to be the most popular management ideas in the history of management thought. In a field where there are no easily available measures of popularity, the thesis follows Davis's (1971) suggestion, mentioned in the previous chapter. Article selections and surveys of managers and management academics are used to establish a popularity index. These sources focus on the practising manager and the business school academic. Thus, what is offered is the best available assessment of what are considered to be the most popular management ideas.

The chapter continues by supporting proposition two by demonstrating, through the use of examples, how original management ideas have been reformulated. It argues that it is necessary to distinguish between the originals and the reformulations and focus upon the latter. This is because the popularly transmitted, understood and applied management ideas are the most relevant. Evidence is then presented to support propositions three to six. These examine the content of the popular management ideas in depth. Twelve features have been identified *a priori* grouped under three categories:

Understanding	contribution-ownership potential
of work world	individual focus
	communicability

Legitimation	management control
	leadership focus
	legitimatory
	human nature model

Applicability	universality of application
	quick fix
	pay-off
	set of steps or principles
	authorization

Throughout the presentation of evidence, the comments of critical authors will be cited in relation to proposition seven.

Establishing popularity

Since nomenclature represents a potential problem, this will be dealt with immediately. What is collectively referred to as *management thought* in historical accounts of the subject by authors such as Wren (1973) consists of theories, research findings, frameworks, propositions, beliefs, views, saws and suggestions. It is an untidy hotchpotch of diverse offerings. Linguistically therefore, it is convenient to adopt a set of standardised labels for use throughout the thesis.

It is proposed that the term **management idea** is applied to all abstract thought units or systems of such units. Kramer (1975) defined a management idea as a fairly stable body of knowledge about what managers ought to do. He said that it:

"... derived from inductive and deductive reasoning. It is systematically organized knowledge applicable to a relatively wide area of circumstances. As a system of assumptions, accepted principles and rules of procedures ... (it) assists managers to analyze and explain the underlying causes of a given business situation and predict the outcome of alternate courses of action."

Kramer (1975: 47)

Where there can be said to be sufficient similarity between these ideas or systems of ideas, then the term **family of management ideas** will be used. Finally, where the idea or idea system spawns a clearly defined set of actions which go beyond mere thought, but actually seek to alter the behaviour of individuals, groups or organizations in some way, then the label **idea technique** will be applied.

The task of identifying what can be agreed to be the the most popular ideas in management thought through the ages is a difficult one. Nevertheless, it does represent the starting point of the thesis. The problem of identification is compounded by the potentially different responses of two sub-populations which might be expected to share a broadly similar perspective - business school academics and managers. Miner (1980: 452) for example, felt that there was a strong negative correlation with the ideas being espoused by one group (e.g. academics) tending to be rejected by the other (e.g. managers). To overcome this problem, Davis's (1971) suggestion is adopted. He recommended surveying academics in one's chosen field asking them to name their favourite ideas; analysing the ideas chosen for highlighting in the major journals; as well as investigating popular texts of "selected readings". The following ten publications were found which fitted Davis's suggestions.

1 and 2.   Matteson

Matteson (1974) reported the findings of a survey carried out among the 2123 members of the American Academy of Management.   The questionnaire asked these academics for their thoughts on contributions that

"... had greatly influenced management thought and research" (Matteson 1974: 386). He achieved only a 27 per cent response rate in his survey, but nevertheless, produced a list of the top ten journal articles and top ten books in management. These two listings will be considered in a single categorization based upon their authors' names so as to avoid duplication.

3. Pollard

In the late 1970s, Pollard (1974; 1978) wrote two books which summarized the main schools of management ideas. The first volume considered authors from the 1900-60 period, while the second looked at the years to 1970. In his preface to his first book, Pollard wrote that he sought to help students to *"... find out how management had developed"* and to give them *"... background to management theory"* (Pollard 1974: ii). His second text aimed to give readers *"a fair cross-section of the writings on management relevant to the 1960-70 decade"* (Pollard 1978: vii). His first volume dealt with 18 authors and his second with 24.

4 and 5. Pugh; and Pugh, Hickson and Hinings

There is a high degree of overlap between these two books (Pugh, Hickson and Hinings, 1983; Pugh 1984). The first is a summary by the authors of the contributions of selected management writers, while the second contains extracts from their original books. The similarity that Pugh et al. see in the writers whose work they have chosen to feature is that,

> *"... the influence of their work has been felt in the last twenty years.*
> *All have attempted to draw together information and distil theories*
> *of how organizations function and how they should be managed.*
> *Their writings have been theoretical in the sense that they have tried*
> *to discover generalizations applicable to all organizations".*

> Pugh, Hickson and Hinings (1983:9)

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In the introduction to his book of readings, Pugh (1984:9) wrote:

> *"The basis for selection for this wide ranging volume has been to include those writers whose work has had a clear impact on thinking, practice and research in the subject."*

6. Miner

A sixth source of data about suitable ideas for inclusion in this research was provided by Miner (1980:1982). The ideas included in this book were nominated by:

> *"... recognised scholars in the field of organizational study. More than than thirty-five individuals suggested theories for consideration. All theories on which most of the scholars were agreed are discussed here."*

<div align="right">Miner (1982: 453)</div>

7, 8, 9 and 10. Tosi; Koontz, Clutterbuck and Crainer; and Pierce and Newstrom

Four additional texts were consulted as a final check. Those by Tosi (1984); Koontz (1961 and 1980); Clutterbuck and Crainer (1988 and 1990); and Pierce and Newstrom (1988 and 1990). The last of these was particularly interesting. It considered the best selling texts of the 1980s based on the dimensions of **market acceptance** (volume of sales achieved); **provocativeness** (presenting viewpoints which run counter to traditional management thought); **distinctiveness** (presenting a variety of interesting topical themes to managers); **author reputation** those having a strong reputation and the quality of their thinking and the insights they have historically generated.

Using these references, each management idea mentioned was held to be "voted for". For ease of analysis the votes were allocated to the names of the writers whose work was mentioned rather than to their books or articles. A total of 129 names were identified and none of the names received more than eight votes. Since the earliest of the aforementioned ten sources dates from 1969, the more recent writers do not appear as often in the voting. What is interesting is the length of the list which indicates that beyond a hard core of writers there is little consensus as to who the really influential contributors are. Appendix A contains the full list of names and the number of votes cast for each. The total was 306 which forms the basis of the percentage calculations. The authors who hold the top eight positions are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Most popular management writers

	Name	Votes
1.	Henri Fayol	
	Douglas McGregor	8
3.	Peter Drucker	7
	Frederick Herzberg	
	Tom Peters	
6.	Frederick Winslow Taylor	
	Rensis Likert	6
	Chris Argyris	

For the purposes of this research it is most useful to group the individual names according to the similarity of their perspective. This produces a set of "families" of management ideas. Table 2.2 lists these families in chronological order together with the combined votes achieved in each case, and what percentage these represent of the total 306 votes.

To these five families a sixth will be added. This will be labelled Guru Theory. This school has acquired prominence in the 1980s. While not yet featuring extensively in management textbooks it has received widespread attention in the financial and business press (Lorenz, 1986a; Byrne, 1986; Clutterbuck and Crainer, 1988; Pierce and Newstrom, 1988 and 1990). These diverse and unrelated set of writings include the thoughts of well-known chief executives such as Lee Iacocca, Harold Geneen, John Harvey-Jones and John Scully; of management consultants like Tom Peters and Philip Crosby; and of modern business school academics like Michael Porter, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Henry Mintzberg and Kenneth Blanchard. Since they are so diverse and since they draw so much of their authority from the idea developers themselves, they will be referred to as Guru Theory.

Table 2.2:   Grouping of the votes of the most popular writers into management idea families.

Idea family	Writers	Votes	
Bureaucracy	Blau	2	
	Scott	1	
	Brown	1	
	Crozier	2	
	Jaques	2	
	Michels	1	
	Selznick	1	
	Thompson	2	
	Weber	3	
			15 (4.9%)
Scientific management	Taylor	6	
	Gantt	2	
	Gilbreth	2	
			10 (3.3%)
Administrative management	Barnard	5	
	Fayol	8	
	Follett	1	
	Mooney	1	
	Sloan	3	
			18 (5.9%)
Human relations	Mayo	4	
	Brown	1	
	Roethlisberger and Dickson	1	
			6 (2.0%)
Neo-human relations	Argyris	6	
	Bennis	4	
	Blake and Mouton	4	
	Herzberg	7	
	Likert	6	
	McGregor	8	
	Maslow	3	
	Schein	3	
			41 (13.4%)
Guru theory	Drucker	7	
	Peters	7	
	Porter	3	
	Kanter	3	
	Iacocca	3	
	Blanchard	3	
			26 (8.5%)

In total, the management idea-families accounted for 38% of the total votes cast. In the next section of this chapter, each of the aforementioned six management idea families will be considered in turn. As mentioned earlier, the focus of the thesis analysis will not be upon the validity or accuracy of each management idea system but on the reasons for its potential appeal to practising managers and management students. Initially thirteen recurring attributes of popular management ideas were identified and each was labelled as follows:

1.   Management control

The management idea was perceived as increasing managers' control over their area of responsibility.

2.   Management legitimation

The idea legitimated and emphasised the importance of the role of management within the organization, society or both.

3.   Guarantee of pay-off

Managers' perceived that the effort involved in implementing it would give them a certain and valued return.

4.   Steps or principles

The idea possessed a set of clear steps or guiding principles which assisted the process of adoption and implementation.

5. Communicability

The management idea was easily understood initially by the managers, and they they were able to explain it to their colleagues and fellow workers.

6. Unitary perspective

The idea took, as its starting point, the notion that managers and workers had common interests even though these were not always apparent to them.

7. Universal application

The idea was not limited to certain types of companies or industry sectors but had a universal application to all organizations.

8. Authorization

Authorization refers to the credibility basis of the idea. Three bases for popular management ideas were identified. These were was common-sense, empirical findings and use by others.

9. Individualistic perspective

Ideas which had a basis in psychology rather than sociology were favoured. That is, those which explained employee conduct and prescribed action in terms of individual behaviour.

10. Human nature model

Popular ideas contained a clear and implicit statement about the nature of man as clearly good or bad, and as amenable to being changed.

11.   Quick fix potential

These theories not only guaranteed success sometime in the future but also stressed that such a return would be attained in a short period of time.

12.   Contribution-ownership potential

The management ideas, while prescribing steps and principles, were not so inflexible as to prevent minor adaptions being made by their users to customize them to their own needs and thereby give them a feeling of personal ownership.

13.   Leadership focus

The management idea contained somewhere within it, and usually stressed, the leadership aspect of management.

None of the six management idea families possessed all thirteen features described, but each had a majority of them as Table 2.3 shows.   The thirteen recurring attributes are interdependent, complementary and overlapping. They have been intentionally separated. For example, "guarantee of pay-off" and "quick-fix" are closely related aspects but have been kept separate at this stage so as to facilitate empirical analysis later on.

The remainder of this chapter will take each of the six management idea families in turn, and using the thirteen a priori variables, will examine which family possesses which ones.   Evidence is cited to support the argument. Where such evidence is lacking, this is acknowledged. The presentation of each management idea family will not be predominantly descriptive. While a brief introduction will set each one in its historical context, it will be assumed that the reader is already familiar with the basic elements of each idea family.

Table 2.3: Summary of characteristics possessed by the six management idea families.

Characteristic	BUREAUCRACY	SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT	HUMAN RELATIONS	NEO-HUMAN RELATIONS	GURU THEORY
Leadership focus				*	*	*
Contribution - ownership potential		*		*	*	*
Quick fix	*	*	*	*	*	*
Human nature model		*		*	*	*
Individualistic perspective		*		*	*	*
Authorization	*	*	*	*	*	*
Universal application	*	*	*	*	*	*
Unitary perspective		*	*	*	*	*
Communicability	*	*	*	*	*	*
Steps on principles	*	*	*	*	*	*
Guarantee of pay-off	*	*	*	*	*	*
Management legitimation	*	*	*	*	*	*
Management control	*	*	*	*	*	*

NATURE OF MANAGEMENT IDEAS

Reflecting on the history of management thought, one can discern bodies of organizational practice which draw upon a tradition of research and theorising (of sorts) which goes back to the work of Taylor at the beginning of the century. Despite the efforts to dignify this body of writing as "theory", a distinguishing feature of it has been its fierce pragmatism. Such pragmatism reflects both the concern to be applied knowledge and, in the view of many critical observers, the result of a conscious or formulated refusal to ask any fundamental questions about the nature of organization.

A consideration of popular management ideas involves the examination not only of the world of applied theory at the level of subject matter, but also of the enormously lucrative world of management consultancy and training which requires "touch" theories or ideas for its own legitimation and development. This imposes two types of constraint on the nature and form of the evolving management ideas. First, the ideas and their associated techniques must be acceptable to the organizations that pay the fees. Key aspects of organizational life, such as its political nature, tend to be excluded. Issues of conflicting attitudes are also frequently displaced into various semi-therapeutic and psychological treatments.

A second limitation on what can be said and written, if it is to achieve popularity, arises from the connection between management thinking and the paying organization. This affects how the management idea is packaged and sold by a consultant as a training service. The popular management ideas which will be considered in this chapter are likely to be presented in the form of logos or pseudo-theoretical models which form the basis of a two or three day training programme. Thus, pragmatic ideas in the form of McGregor's "Theory X and Theory Y", Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs", and Herzberg's "Motivators and Hygiene Factors", Peters and Waterman's "7-S" model will be included. All of these can be summarised on one page of a course handout in form of a logo or on an overhead projector transparency.

Critics of the managerialist school (Salaman, 1978; Clegg, 1975; Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980) have argued that an important function of management ideas has been to legitimate the existing structures of power and authority in organizations which would have been contested had they been presented directly. For this reason, management ideas have needed to be communicable and comprehensible to a wider group of people than just top managers. They have had to be understood by both middle and junior managerial ranks as well as those being managed. Although the families of management ideas to be investigated in this chapter appear superficially to differ greatly, they can all be said to represent a broad consensus on the nature of organizational management in a capitalist society that goes back for a hundred years. While there is no formulated agreement on particular areas in the wide field of management ideas, there is a broadly accepted model and a set of assumptions about organizational structure and technique. This represents a sort of common sense understanding of what management is or should be in an organization.

Such a high degree of consensus is not surprising. The common underlying agreement referred to might be called the "capitalist imperative". The theories to be discussed all emerged from Europe and the United States. The capitalist form of organization therefore specified objectives such as profit maximization, and the role and power relations between those involved in the production process. It set limits on which goals could be pursued and which forms of work organization were acceptable if the fundamental system was not to break down. Mimicking the communist system of organization, the capitalist system rejected any questioning of either the basic terms on which the management of the organization was conducted or of the political disposition in which it existed. These potentially troublesome questions were simply bracketed, acknowledged in asides, or obliquely referred to in externally determined matters such as the contracts of employment and their regulation by law. The political nature of organization is rarely referred to directly in any of the popular management literature.

A distinction needs to be drawn between the task of critiquing the management ideas themselves and that of conducting an analysis to explain their popularity. Each of the management idea families has been subjected

to a great deal of censure. Some of this has come from critical writers who have challenged the implicit values and perspectives of the management ideas. A second body of criticism has emanated from those who have claimed that the management writers' assumptions were invalid, that there were major methodological flaws, and that the proposed techniques which were implemented did not produce the results claimed. This particular body of criticism will not be explicitly addressed in the thesis since the primary objective is to explain the popularity of certain management ideas themselves. The critical literature will be selectively used since these writers have challenged those aspects of the management ideas which, it is argued, give them their appeal to managers. It has been found that it is often the critical perspectives on these management ideas which provide the initial indication of the causes of popularity.

A major difficulty in seeking to explain the popularity of certain sets of ideas in the history of management thought is the uncertainty of what is being considered. Given a theoretical framework such as scientific management, there are a number of different perceptions of it. For example, one can describe, analyse and evaluate,

* what the originator of the idea actually said (based on original sources)

* what the teacher, tutor or consultant has interpreted the originator to have said (based on an analysis of textbooks and teacher's lecture notes).

* what the manager or management student understands the originator to have said, based on a presentation or reading (identified from an interview with the manager, or a review of the student's exam script or lecture notes).

For the last forty years, business school academics have played an important but decreasing gatekeeper role of bringing selected ideas to the attention of managers. In the absence of such academics, for example in the period 1900-1940, management ideas such as scientific management and administrative management ideas were promoted and interpreted by consultants and managers. Such differences are common. Economists have long distinguished Marx from the Marxists, and Friedman from the Friedmanites. It is often the case that what the originator of an idea said, and what his interpreters (e.g. business school academics or consultants) and idea consumers (managers and management students) have understood him to say, have differed.

A comparison between the original writings of the management idea developers in the six management idea families and their popular interpretations all reveal differences of interpretation. In some cases the original idea was reformulated to such a degree that their authors could be charged with misrepresentation. To illustrate this point a sub-set of two management idea families are selected at random. These are scientific management and human relations. Patzig and Zimmerman (1985) reported inaccuracies in the reporting of management ideas and the creation of "pseudo-history".

The authors considered Taylor's four principles of scientific management (Taylor, 1911: 36-7) in relation to their presentation in eleven randomly selected textbooks. They found that nine of these books presented the four principles inaccurately, while three reported Taylor's work in a way that could easily lead to misunderstanding. In addition, they found that some writers had left out some of the principles while other had added new ones. In his original account, for example, Roethlisberger (1941: 156) argued that that the Hawthorne experiments had shown that "... *the factors that make for efficiency in a business organization are not necessarily the same as those factors that make for happiness, teamwork, morale, or any other word which might be used to refer to co-operative situations".* Yet Patzig and Zimmerman found a textbook claiming that the Hawthorne studies has discovered that that "... *management has at long last discovered that there is greater production, and hence greater profit when workers are satisfied with their jobs. Improve the morale of a company and you improve production"* (Parker and Kleemeir

(1951: 10). Vroom (1964: 181) claimed "... *human relations might be described as an attempt to increase productivity by satisfying the needs of employees".*

Patzig and Zimmerman (1985) attributed such inaccurate reporting of management ideas by lecturers to basic laziness. That is, their reluctance to take the time and trouble to return to the original sources. They were concerned about two consequences of these inaccuracies. First they feared that managers would come to perceive such texts as untrustworthy and would avoid implementing the ideas presented. Alternatively, the teaching of inaccurate theory would result in the manager coming away with an mistaken grasp of the idea which, when he applied it, would find that it did not work. Patzig and Zimmerman asked how management academics could maintain credibility in their academic institutions with their colleagues and other corporate clients when they seemed unable to report their own ideas accurately.

Not all business school academics have been so stringent. Lee (1987) in fact argued for the reformulation of management ideas in order to produce what he called "appropriate theories" for consumption by managers. His argument was that there was an "experiential learning gap" between what a theory could do to explain the practitioner's reality, and what the manager needed to know. Thus, management ideas had to be taught in an "appropriate" as opposed to an "inappropriate" form. The latter was one which might confuse the manager by over-emphasised the complexity of life. It might cause "paralysis-of-analysis" and might place the need for full understanding ahead of the need to act effectively. In contrast, "appropriate" versions of popular management theories, said Lee (1987:25), were:

> "... *created by taking the core idea of the parent theory and turning them in some simple way without too much jargon ... Important caveats may be dropped and attempts to increase impact and teach-ability may result in the loss or distortion of meaning of the underlying theory ... when the educator is a skilled professional, the underlying ideas have been converted into something which is in effect a new, more appropriate theory".*

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For Lee, the best support for this reformulated management idea was not its explanatory power but its widespread acceptance by practitioners because of its high usefulness to them. His ultimate test of a management idea was that it was a *"reasonable reflection of reality as perceived by the practitioner"*, that it could *"assist in the development of personal conceptual frameworks which will be of value in support of practical goals."* (Lee 1987: 250). The aim of appropriate theory was not to be right but to be useful.

What Lee in effect offered was an argument to legitimate the reformulation of original management ideas into a form which would give them wider ranging popular appeal along the lines being identified in this thesis. Indeed, he identified **theories of useful error** which were management ideas which, despite their scientific inadequacy, were useful for the development of insights among practitioners who were not themselves scientists. He contrasted these with **theories of necessary simplification** which, although accurate by scientific criteria, were so complex that they had to be introduced to practitioners in an appropriate (simplified) form by conscious reformulation on the part of the consultant or business academic. Alongside these one might add Patzig and Zimmerman's (1975) **theories of unconscious reformulation** where scientifically adequate or inadequate ideas were incorrectly communicated by lecturers or consultants. Lee argued that the management ideas used in post-experience management education, even though they may be of limited validity were:

> *"... essential for the proper education of managers [but]... it is the widespread use of such theories which is responsible for many of the attacks directed at those who teach management in the academic world. Our discipline is not seen as academically respectable by our colleagues who work in more traditional areas."*

> Lee (1987: 247)

Critics of this view have argued that if engineers or doctors were taught such "appropriate" theories they could either kill themselves or others. Discussing the techniques based upon the vast range of what have been collectively referred here to as management ideas, Anthony noted that the basic idea from which such techniques were distantly derived could not have been appropriate "... *but the image in which it is presented must be acceptable and be deemed appropriate.*" (Anthony,(1987: 258). Given this difference between the original and the reformulated management idea, the thesis will examine the latter which might be termed "popularly received wisdom".

BUREAUCRACY

Weber's theory of bureaucracy is often presented alongside the work of administrative management writers such as Fayol, Gulick and Urwick who will be considered later. Weber's own work set in a historical-philosophical context. However, its specific conclusions established the basis for the work of these other writers. Weber was a German sociologist-philosopher (1864-1920) and not a manager, engineer or a management consultant. His interest was in the process of social change, and in particular, in the effect of rationality on religious thought and capitalism. By rationality he meant the kind of action or mode of organizing in which goals are clearly conceived and all conduct, except that designed to achieve the particular goal, is eliminated.

From this historical perspective he examined different types of authority. Charismatic authority he said, was based upon a belief in the sacred or extra-ordinary characteristics of the person giving the order (e.g. Christ). In the traditional form of authority, orders were obeyed because people believed that the person giving them had traditionally done so (e.g. king or lord). In the legal-rational form of authority, the orders were obeyed because people believed that the person giving them was acting in accordance with legal rules and regulations. The term that Weber applied to the organizational form built upon pure legal-rational authority was bureaucracy.

Fully developed and in its most rational form, bureaucracy necessarily pre-supposed the concepts of legitimacy and authority. The Weberian model of bureaucracy offers a stable and predictable world which provides the blueprint for "rationally designed" structures in which "rational" individuals carry out their prescribed roles and actions. For Weber, "rationality of action" had to be judged against some objective standard and this formal rationality was reflected in the management thought and literature that followed it. Weber saw the bureaucratic form of organization possessing the following features:

Specialization   "Each office has a clearly defined sphere of competence."

Hierarchy   "A firmly ordered system of super- and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by a higher one."

Rules   "The management of the office follows general rules, which are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, which can be learned.

Impersonality   "Sine et studio, without hatred or passion, and hence without affection or enthusiasm. Everyone is subject to formal equality of treatment. This is the spirit in which the ideal official conducts his business."

Appointed officials   "Candidates are selected on the basis of technical qualifications. They are appointed, not elected."

Full time officials   "The office is treated as the sole, or at least primary occupation."

Career officials   "The job constitutes a career. There is a system of promotion according to seniority, or to achievement, or both."

Private /public split   " Bureaucracy segregates official activity as something distinct from the sphere of private life. Public monies and equipment are divorced from the private property of the individual."

Weber (1948: 204) wrote that bureaucracy existed, *"in ever purer forms in the modern European states and, increasingly, (in) all public organizations since the time of princely absolution ..."* His view was that the larger the modern capitalist enterprise was, the more complicated it became. Perrow (1972 : 50) noted that *"... every organization of any significance is bureaucratised to some degree. or to put it differently, exhibits more or less stable patterns based upon a structure of roles and specialised tasks".*   Weber's writings have stimulated a great deal of theoretical discussion and empirical research which has gone some way in challenging his view about the technical superiority of bureaucratic forms of organizations.

However, the interest here is not directly upon the validity of Weber's ideas but upon the appeal that bureaucracy, as a management idea, has had for managers over the years through to the present day. Which of the thirteen hypothesised attributes of a popular management idea are particularly relevant to bureaucracy?

1.   **Management control**

One of Weber's axioms was that if management did not gain control of an industry then the "management" of that industry rested with labour. Management control was seen as something that had to be wrested from the workers. Gouldner (1954) argued that bureaucracy could be seen as part of the power relationships between the controllers and the controlled. He felt

that it was a method of control through which senior organization members attempted to impose their wills upon subordinates when they found that the other control mechanisms were inadequate. Writers, such as Merton (1957), Blau (1955), Crozier (1964) and Salaman (1981) have made the same point.

> *"Bureaucracy is necessary to control and monitor the labour of alienated and recalcitrant employees. The development of bureaucracy entails the centralization of control, the de-humanization of rationality or instrumentality, and the differentiation of the workforce".*

> Salaman (1981: 135)

Rationality reflects the application of a formal structure of administration as a means of managing complex tasks. Bureaucracy thus permits the calculation and predictability of future outcomes, together with accountability, and more control of activities. For Weber, the ideal type of bureaucracy contained formal control specified in rules and regulations created by management which devised stable procedures and limited authority. Additionally it offered *"... an integration of structure, tasks, authority and information flows"* (Herriott and Firestone, 1984: 42-3).

Perrow (1977:7) wrote in support of bureaucracy and acknowledged that while it was a superior form of organization, it both mobilized social resources for desirable ends and inevitably concentrated them in a few hands of those who might use them for ends which others may not approve of, be unaware of, but which they might have to accept because they could not conceive of any alternative.

Weber commented on how mechanization and plant discipline completely altered the psycho-physical apparatus of workers so as to make them fit the demands of the tools and machines. He noted that the whole process of rationalization had its parallel in the centralization of the other organizational resources into the hands of the managers who were able to exercise discretionary power. The rationality of bureaucracy had its own

appeal. It increased the control exercised by managers, while at the same time projecting a neutrality. Weber stressed the rationalistic view of organizations with its emphasis on means-end relationships, the maximization of efficiency, decision-making as a logical process, and the design of structural arrangements to achieve these outcomes. From this perspective, one can see that as an organizational form, bureaucracy offered managers a high degree of control.

2.   Management legitimation

Bureaucratic authority was seen as having advantages over other types of organizational forms since rational action was in evidence throughout the firm and in the organizational relations in its markets and clients. When people perceived the office holders to be competent, decisions were seen to be taken formally and resources accounted for. This upheld the belief in its legitimacy. Such beliefs were further supported by the fact that the managers themselves were subject to the same interpersonal rules. The appeal of rationality therefore existed independently of the personal qualities of managers. It outlasted the individuals and was not based on tradition or habit, which might be questioned. Hence it was seen as being the most stable form of authority.

Bureaucratic forms of organization acted to legitimate the role of managers in the organization. Baker (1972: 38) commenting on Burnham (1962), claimed that he had vulgarised Weber's ideas, and, *"... added enormously to the managers' myth - the belief in social, political and economic necessity of oligarchic, rational authoritarian directions in particular, and of society in general".* It is not the accuracy of Weber's argument that is important here but rather the way his ideas have been presented by management writers and consultants and have come to be accepted by their management listeners.

3.   **Guarantee of pay-off**

As a form of organization did bureaucracy actually work? It was the technical superiority of bureaucracy over its historical predecessors which, in Weber's opinion, accounted for its increasing adoption. He wrote:

> *The capitalist market economy ... demands the official business of the administration to be discharged precisely, unambiguously, continuously, and with as much speed as possible. Normally, the very large modern capitalist enterprises are themselves unequalled models of strict bureaucratic organization".*

<div align="right">

Weber (1948: 215)

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In the same section of his book, Weber made a statement which would not have been out of place in a product description of an advertising leaflet selling the concept of bureaucracy to managers:

> *"Business management throughout rests on increasing precision, steadiness and above all, the speed of operations ... Bureaucratization offers above all the optimum possibility for carrying through the principle of specializing administrative functions according to purely objective considerations".*

<div align="right">

Weber (1948: 215)

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4.   **Steps or principles**

Theoretical ideas are often more appealing if they can be translated into action. If a theory or model offers a clear set of steps to be followed or a set of principles to be instituted, then the chances of a positive response amongst managers and the subsequent implementation of the idea technique is significantly increased. Bureaucracy offered eight such principles which were detailed at the beginning of this section. Each principle represented a

"should" and, in terms of their prescriptive character, they were similar in form (if not in content) to those offered by Peters and Waterman (1982). These principles acted as organizational guidelines for senior managers designing their organizations.

5.   Communicability

Obvious but not trivial, was the fact that managers could understand the principles of bureaucracy. They understood the notion of rules, regulations and the idea of categorizing employees. The big message that was received by managers was the importance of the division of tasks in order to increase predictability of behaviour, increase skill, and facilitate surveillance and evaluation of staff. They appreciated that, in attempting to control outside influences, the bureaucratic organization sought to stabalize and routinize its own processes in the interests of internal efficiency.

6.   Unitary perspective

Did bureaucracy convey the idea that management and workers were united in a common endeavour? No explicit evidence was found in the literature to support this proposition. All that can be said is that in constructing his ideal-type model of bureaucracy, Weber (1947) did propose the first structural-functional theory of organization. In his view, the organization was to be treated as a largely stable phenomenon having unitary goals, predictive rules and regulations and a hierarchy of rational legal authority. An essential characteristic of the ideal type bureaucracy was a coherent set of goals which gave a clear direction and which formally translated into the various sub-tasks to be achieved. Thus the most that can be said is that there was an implicit reference to the notion of commonality of goals.

7.   Universal application

Could the principles of bureaucracy be applied to any organization? The proponents of bureaucracy claimed that they could. The principles themselves have undergone a considerable revision since their original presentation by Weber in the early years of this century. Part of the appeal of bureaucracy lay in its ability to structure virtually any large organizational system. Given our current state of knowledge, bureaucracy has become the structural template for the large organization across the world. Bureaucracies have arisen in Western industrialised capitalist countries, in developing Third World countries, and in communist systems. The underlying belief is that the greater the rationality, formalization, standardization and centralization of the enterprise or institution, the more effective it will be.

The choice of bureaucracy as an organizational form is made easy for large system designers because of the lack of any available alternative form. Non-bureaucratic forms of organization do not appear to be appropriate to the needs of professional, task and group systems. As organizations grow, bureaucracy is often superimposed upon the existing system in order to deal with its expanded size.

While there was a clear intention in Weber's writings to signal the technical superiority of the bureaucratic form of organization, his comments were set in the historic context of the organizational forms that has preceded it, and which were based on charismatic and traditional forms of authority. He himself was not seeking to "sell" bureaucracy. Indeed, he was critical of its effects on both modern society and on the administrators who inhabited it. Nevertheless, Weber's message was capable of being vulgarised by succeeding writers to give the impression that there was "one-best-way" to organize which was applicable in all situations.

8.   Authorization

This refers to the claimed source of authority upon which the idea drew in order to support his ideas. Most often the source is either commonsense, research or experience. In this case, Weber's ideas were based on his historical research. In addition, bureaucracy as an idea, appealed to managers' commonsense. It possessed a face-validity, because it was grounded in a rational approach that appealed to its readers and adopters. The bureaucratic model made it clear to managers that the organizational discipline in the factory was founded upon a completely rational basis.

9.   Individualistic perspective

The bureaucractic model largely ignores individuals, and does not say much their motivations. However, one can make reference to the over-arching legal-rational value-system.   This was embodied in the bureaucratic rules, and was internalised as the typical orientation of members.   It provided the normative basis to, and a justification for managerial authority (Weber 1947). Similarly, Littler (1982) argued that bureaucracy created a different form of employment relationship which was based upon employee commitment to the organization. It attempted to ensure employee integration and involvement, partly by structural means such as the provision of careers and long term contracts, and also by the internalization of organizational rules which were felt to be rational and fair.   In principle, bureaucracy provided a solution to some of the employee problems which taxed managers, and led them to develop various management ideologies, because it seemed to make managerial authority legitimate, and provided norms of effective work performance.

10. Human nature view

Along with the other grand theories of organizational structure, bureaucracy ignores factors associated with individual behaviour. Personnel are seen as system givens rather than as variables. They were viewed as inert instruments performing the tasks assigned to them. This feature of bureaucracy acts to differentiate it from other popular management idea families.

11. Quick fix potential

A feature of popular management ideas is their ability to produce results quickly for their users. The application of the bureaucratic model involves the analysis of jobs and their delineation into highly specialised tasks. When this happens, the jobs and the people in them, become highly amenable to prescription, and the bureaucratic process begins to dominate. Such specialization and routinization are held to increase the efficiency of task performance.

12. Contribution - ownership potential

A review of popular management ideas suggests that their appeal is enhanced to managers if they are capable of being modified or adjusted in some way by their adopters. How does this aspect relate to the notion of universality of application presented earlier? On the one hand, evidence will be presented later to show that managers prefer non-contingency theories. At the same time, they value an idea's capacity to be adapted and modified within prescribed, narrow limits. There is no incompatibility between the two notions of universality and contribution since the modification or customization will tend to be marginal, sufficient to create a sense of ownership for its promoter, but not large enough to destroy the "big idea".

In these terms, contribution-ownership is not a major feature of bureaucracy if judged by the evidence of the research literature examined. It would be stretching the evidence to suggest that this is the case. All that can be said is that, as with any other popular management idea, there is scope for modification by the implementer. Different principles of bureaucracy can be given different weights and so. Thus, while the model does not explicitly encourage modification, it does not preclude it.

13.   Leadership focus

Does bureaucracy stress leadership in some way? As just mentioned, the model can be implemented in different ways. It has been argued that "structural individualism" supports the Great Man Theory which holds that organizational structure is largely determined by the attributes of the man at the top. Other than this, bureaucracy does not stress leadership issues in any significant way.

SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT

The second popular idea family to be considered is scientific management. This focused upon the shopfloor and upon the techniques that could be used to maximise the productivity of manual workers. While it is not likely to be applied in its pure form, scientific management does represent a template for a great deal of job design work that has been done during the twentieth century. Scientific management principles continue to be widely applied today. In a typical manufacturing organization one will see scientific management ideas and techniques being applied to the shopfloor, and bureaucratic principles of organization being used in the office areas. Watson (1980: 36) reminded his readers that,

"Books which relate the history of management thought frequently give the impression that scientific management is a thing of the past but, in the realm of practical realities, its doctrines and techniques still dominate contemporary work design ... the psychologistic assumptions underlying the approach still hold great sway among practical men."

Developed originally by Frederick Winslow Taylor during the early years of this century, scientific management has exerted a continuing influence on organizational design and management practice. Taylor was a American engineer who established the foundations of the process of work measurement. Time and motion study techniques gave Taylor's ideas the claim to be a science. He based his work upon the "... *accurate and scientific study of unit times*" (Taylor 1903: 58). His aim was, "... *to increase productivity by improving the performance of the workers*" (Anastasi, 1964: 173), by selecting manual tasks and fragmenting them into their simplest and smallest components.

Taylor is best know for his book, *"The Principles of Scientific Management"* which was published in 1911. In it, he explained that in order to increase the productivity of labour, it was necessary to highlight the national loss being incurred through inefficiency; that such inefficiency could be remedied by systematic management; and that the best management was a true science, and rested upon a foundation of clearly defined laws, rules and principles (Taylor, 1911: 1).

Even before his rise to eminence, Taylor had developed and espoused his ideas on management. He argued for an empirical approach to the management of industry that was based upon the application of some specific techniques. These had the capability of being applied to any industrial setting since, he contended, organizations were subject to certain laws in their operation. There were certain constant and regular features in organizations. Observation and experimentation could discover what these were.

Taylor was appalled by the inefficiency of industrial practices that he witnessed and set out to demonstrate how managers and workers could both benefit by adopting his scientific approach. The history of scientific management is well known and documented. Taylor drew attention to "systematic soldiering" (deliberate underworking by employees). This he attributed to weak management control which allowed individuals discretion about the work methods they used. They wasted time and effort, in his view, by using inefficient rules-of-thumb work methods.

At the turn of the century in the United States, managers expected their employees either to possess the appropriate skills for the work they were given, or to learn them from those around them. Notions of systematic job specifications, clearly established responsibilities and training needs analyses, were unknown. Taylor sought to change this. He argued that mental and manual work should be separated. Management, he claimed, should specialise in planning and organizing the work, and the workers should specialise in actually doing it. Taylor regarded this as a way of ensuring industrial harmony as everyone would know clearly what was expected of them, and what their responsibilities were. He also saw clear advantages in making individuals specialise in activities so that they would become expert and highly proficient in them.

Scientific management was based upon four key principles which Taylor (1911: 36-7) said involved new and heavy burdens for managers. These were first, the development of a science for each element of a man's work which would replace the old rule-of-thumb methods. Second, the scientific selection, training and development of workmen to replace the previous practice of them choosing their own work, and training themselves as best they could. Third, co-operating "heartily" with the men so as to ensure that all the work was done in accordance with the scientific principles developed. Finally, an almost equal division of work and responsibility between management and workmen. Management would take over the work for which it was best fitted. Previously, almost all the work, and the greater part of the responsibility, had been placed upon the workers.

Taylor's ideas came to be incorporated in organizational design through the twentieth century. The principles were instituted regularly and extensively for over seventy years, and continue to be applied. No longer are they called Taylorism or "scientific management". At the start, these ideas were so novel that Henry Ford's application of them received media attention. Many decades later, it was the non-application of scientific management techniques, in places such as the Volvo car plant in Kalmar, that stimulated media interest.

This brief description has outlined the historical development and key ideas of one of the most important and widely applied management idea families. Taylor's work was developed and extended by Gilbreth, Gantt and the scientific management writers who followed them. The validity and impact of Taylor's ideas have been widely discussed and criticised (Mouzalis, 1967; Braverman, 1974; Rose, 1978; Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980). The question being asked here however, is what made scientific management so appealing to managers and to companies given that at, the outset, there was hostility to Taylor's ideas?

1.   **Management control**

Scientific management offered managers greater control. Commentators noted that industrial organization was conducted so as to minimize the worker's independence and maximise the capitalist manager's administrative control over work and the worker. Taylorism succeeded because it was the most suitable set of principles for achieving these objectives.

An overriding feature of scientific management was the control that it gave managers over the labour process. Three principles which were basic to management control. These were first, the separation of planning from performance principle leading to management taking over from the workers, the responsibility for planning. Second, the scientific methods of work principle which held that management should take over from the workers, the decisions about which methods of work were to be used. Finally there was the managerial rules principle which not only recommended the use of rules, but also specified the sort of rules to be implemented and hence

assisted with the implementation of the theory at an operational level. Scientific management offered the answers to three major managerial problems. How to organize work most effectively? How to keep employees working hard? How to exercise control over the process?

Task specialization in assembly work reduced work-in-progress and throughput times, took less space and also simplified production control. These clear, "hard", short term gains from Taylor's approach outweighed the less certain and less quantifiabbble, long-term costs and disadvantages which rested on "soft" arguments about the nature of human relations at work. It has always been easier for management to blame workers who have the wrong skills, wrong attitudes and wrong values, than to blame a systematically-prepared job description.

Willmott (1984), a critical writer, argued that Taylor articulated a rationale for the expansion of managerial work. In Taylor's vision, the ideal was for managers to appropriate the traditional expertise of workers and then translate it into standardised rules and even mathematical formulae that would replace custom and practice. This proposed rationalization process allowed the managerial element in the labour process to become virtually detached from the act of production, thereby massively expanding the controlling role (and power) of managers.

Anthony's (1986) view was that the deliberate pursuit of three strategies was considered necessary to supplant the power of the employee. These three strategies were mechanization, labour differentiation and and education. The first prescribed tasks, routines, times and specifications as though by reference to some immutable logic. The second related the organization that followed from that logic to an order of different grades, levels of authority and pay. The third taught the principles upon which the first modes were laid out, and went beyond them to demonstrate their intricate relationship to an economic order, because of its component of free competition, had immanent associations with political freedom and the moral order.

However, what was special about scientific management in this context was that although it aimed primarily at achieving managerial control by the detailed description of performance, it also aimed at securing employee

commitment. Uniquely, it sought to overcome the contradiction in these two objectives. The synthesis was achieved in the way that it demanded allegiance to the scientific laws that were revealed in the process of job analysis. In Taylor's view, there could be no argument about what was to be done and what was the right way to do it. Neither could there be any argument about interests. As production increased considerably, there was not much room for disagreement about the division of the spoils. Taylor (1911: 217) claimed that his system, *"substitutes joint obedience to fact and laws for obedience to personal authority. No such democracy has ever existed in industry before"*. Henry Ford (1922) was able to say that, *"the work and the work alone controls us"*. Of course this was not the case in practice. However, it did give managers a convenient retort to the complaints of workers and unions.

2.   Management legitimation

The legitimating aspect of scientific management emerged in Taylor's claim that his system was more than just a way of running an organization. Braverman (1974: 113-19) argued that the separation of the worker's task from the knowledge that he might possess, acted to make the labour process dependent on managerial practices, rather than on worker ability. Hence one could argue that such a separation was as important in creating (and maintaining) a role for managers, as it was in achieving increased productivity. Salaman (1981: 171) for example, wrote that managerial functions,

> *"... exist only at the expense of the de-skilled shopfloor jobs, or are directly concerned with devising new forms of regulations and integration"*.

The references cited here are clearly those of critical commentators. However, as will be shown later, many organizational change strategies of the late 1980s in the United States and Britain, have sought to re-kindle workforce commitment. The strategies used all involve some degree of worker empowerment. In the past such experiments have been resisted and

terminated by managements. The current attempts at re-structuring and job redesign have often coincided with major reductions (of up to 50%) in middle management levels (Business Week, 1988; The Economist, 1988a). Buchanan argued that giving office and shopfloor workers discretion over managerial sections of an organization's operations was,

> " ... *a greater threat to managerial legitimacy, than (having) individual workers who have little or no idea of how their fragmented tasks contributed to the work of the organization as a whole".*

> Buchanan (1985: 7)

Such evidence suggests that claims such as those of Salaman should at least be examined rather than dismissed out of hand as left-wing and anti-business propaganda. In Taylor's view, the manager's role was essentially that of a controller. That role was the basis of his power. His basic obligation was to the needs of the system. People were viewed as necessary components of the technical system. The manager was therefore responsible for directing and controlling their behaviour in line with the system's needs. The model assumed that if the manager specified the tasks and procedures clearly, selected and trained his workers properly, treated them fairly, and paid them equitably, then he could expect their full compliance with the system's needs. As a controller, he was expected to take corrective action if such compliance was not forthcoming. The superior status of management in the organization was demonstrated within the organization in a number of ways. Buchanan (1985: 6) wrote that,

> "... *Taylor's approach to work design perpetuates the higher status and authority of managers, who work in clean offices, do no manual work, take all the responsibility for decisions, and take home higher financial rewards."*

Marglin (1976) argued that one of the reasons for the popularity of Taylorist techniques was their perceived effectiveness in ensuring a continued high status role for the manager in the production process. Child (1969a) pointed out that scientific management legitimated management by securing approval for its exercise of authority by demonstrating that it possessed an expertise.

Marglin (1976) and Rose (1978) have both commented that Taylorism did originally have a number of radical elements. For example, the proposal to reform managerial authority and that both workers and managers should be bound by the same logic of scientifically determined rules. In one of Taylor's visions, the manager was to become the worker's servant or assistant. His function was to ensure that the worker had all the assistance of efficient organization, training and unimpeded material supply. Many of these ideas share similarities with the writings of the late 1980s such as Tom Peters (1988), J. Edwards Deming (1986) and Jan Carlzon (1987). However, these elements became less evident by about 1911, when Taylor's book was published.

While managers accepted the technical component of what he said, and used it to enhance their own status, the unpalatable aspects of his philosophy were conveniently forgotten. Indeed, the scientific management systems of some of Taylor's successors, such as Bedeux, were preferred by managers because they limited the restrictions placed upon them. Managers were just not prepared to abandon their status or their formal authority, to any joint submission to a new democracy.

Anthony (1977) argued that management required not merely compliance, but open and acknowledged compliance. In fact he felt that if organizations were considered as systems, management required fealty. Management's need for its authority to be acknowledged, in his view, meant that the political aspects of scientific management - Taylor's unprecedented democracy, was something that management could not acknowledge, just as it could never abandon control in order to regain it. Thus, argued Anthony, management set out to find a basis for its authority which could be used as an alternative to the one supplied by scientific management.

Using a distorted version of political theory, the image created by management for itself out of scientific management ideas, was that of a balancer or arbiter of pluralistic coalitions. Management sat in objective and impartial judgement, deciding what was in the best interests of all. Such a position gave it a formidable claim to the exercise of legitimate authority in industry based on a modified version of scientific management which had had all the unhelpful bits taken out.

3. Guarantee of pay-off

The implementation of scientific management did reduce costs and increased profits. In some cases, the benefits were dramatic. It therefore fulfilled one of the basic criteria of a popular management idea - it had a pay-off. Horn (1983: 14) estimated that by 1915 only about 1.3% of American wage earners worked under scientific management. However, he admitted that a larger proportion were affected by some part of it. Applications of the approach grew between the world wars and after 1945, and the techniques continue in existence today.

However, for the first time, doubts are being raised about its appropriateness in a situation where information technology is radically changing the nature of work. The continued use and expansion of Taylorism did not lie in its power to reduce conflict between management and workers. Instead, and despite its shortcomings, it was seen by managers as a way of enhancing the firm's chances of survival. Taylor himself was unhappy that so few firms had adopted his scientific management ideas in their entirety. Most managers adopted only those parts that enhanced their status and the short-term profitability of their company.

4. Steps or principles

As an idea-system, scientific management offered both techniques and principles. The techniques - standard minute values, critical path analysis, optimum batch size and so on, were a direct inheritance of Taylor's system.

For the manager such techniques were not just the tools of his trade, they were also an expression of his professionalism, and of his belief that with them, he could benefit society in general.

Taylor had a three step technique for designing manual jobs that was easily understandable to managers. The first step involved deciding upon the optimum degree of task fragmentation. This involved breaking down complex jobs into their component parts. Second, studies were conducted to discover the one best way of doing each fragmented task. Attention was also paid to workplace layout and the tools to be used. The third and final step was the selection and training of employees to carry out the new fragmented tasks using the one-best-way identified A carefully calculated monetary payment which rewarded above average performance underpinned the operation of Taylor's approach.

Horn (1983: 17) explained that the advocates of scientific management were concerned with producing principles of scientific management. They saw these as the features of any scientific approach. While the results varied widely, the advocates claimed that the principles did provide a disparate collection of guidelines as to how managers ought to organize in order to be effective. Scientific management therefore was both a philosophy and a logically consistent package of idea-techniques for the efficiency-minded production engineer. Clegg and Dunkerley (1980: 91) called them a, "...*set of principles, a checklist of ideas, and inventory of guidelines"*. March and Simon (1958: 20) agreed, and described Taylor's work as consisting of a set of operating procedures that could be employed in each concrete situation to discover the methods that would be efficient in that situation, and to secure their application.

5. Communicability

A description of Taylor's principles are easily understood by the practising manager and the undergraduate management student alike. Grounded in work-analysis and time-and-motion study, the fundamentals of scientific

management are both easily communicated and have a face-validity. While the more sophisticated and elaborate elements may be more obscure, the basic core ideas are easily grasped.

6.   Unitary perspective

Taylor and his followers stressed the benefits of their ideas for all members of the company.   Their application, he claimed, would encourage a harmonious fellowship between managers and workers. Many interpreters of Taylor claimed that high productivity led to high job satisfaction thereby making trade unions unnecessary.   Taylor insisted that, provided the pay was right and the amount of work required to be done had been scientifically measured, the worker would welcome entering into an individual commitment with management in which he would happily do the job. Both would benefit equally and share common goals. Taylor invited management to believe that the worker was prepared to connive with management in the cheerful destruction of his own psychological and sociological aspirations. He was unequivocal in his belief and wrote,

> *"Scientific management ... has for its very foundation the firm conviction that the true interests of the two are one and the same; that prosperity for the employer cannot exist through a long term of years unless it is accompanied by prosperity of the employee and vice-versa ..."*

(Taylor, 1911: 10-11)

Watson (1980: 36) expressed the   view   that in the world of scientific management there was "... *no need for conflict between management and worker (let alone trade union) as long as management follows truly objective scientific methods".*   The separation of thinking and doing would, in Taylor's view, be a way of ensuring industrial harmony as everybody would clearly know what was expected of them and what their responsibilities were.

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7. Universal application

Proponents of scientific management argued that it could be applied in all organizations. Thus, it claimed a universal application. Indeed, it is difficult to envisage any organization in which at least some of the techniques such as time-and-motion study could not be used. Clegg and Dunkerley explained the underlying reasons for the universal application,

> *"These techniques could be applied to any industrial situation since any enterprise was subject to certain basic laws in its operation. There were always certain constant and regular features in organizations".*

> Clegg and Dunkerley (1980: 88)

8. Authorization

The name of the idea-system implied that scientific laws could be derived from management practice and that these were related to the ways of doing work and paying wages. Establishing such laws involved managers using scientific methods. In Taylor's view, the methods that were used in engineering could be applied to management. Reich commented on this idea,

> *"The very name of the new discipline suggested benign progressiveness. Management implied guidance and restraint necessary for social harmony. Science bespoke disinterestedness and rigour. Together, the words "scientific management" provided the perfect banner for a new wave of reformers who sought to control and regulate society rather than uproot it".*

> (Reich 1984: 63)

9.   Individualistic perspective

Scientific management was a psychological-individual theory.   That is, it focused on individual behaviour and explained it   in physiological and psychological terms. Strother (1963: 9) wrote that,

> *"It was primarily a theory of line management, task organization; and supervision for greater efficiency; work measurement and incentives ..."*

Although matters concerning the choice of tools and the properties of materials figured prominently in Taylor's analyses, it was his work on shopfloor worker movements for which he is perhaps best remembered. This is an area which would now be labelled time-and-motion study. The control of individual performance was of prime importance to him.   He defined management as knowing what one wanted men to do, and then seeing that they did it in the best way.

Taylor's view of the individual workers was a low one.   His explanation of their "systematic soldiering" indicated to him that their *"... natural instinct was to take things easy"* (Taylor 1911).   This innate tendency of workers together with management's failure to design, allocate and plan scientifically, conspired to hold down production.   Taylor did not see soldiering as a consequence of people's sociability.   He felt that management should relate to each worker as an individual and satisfy his personal self-interest.   Hence, his explanation of work behaviour was a psychologistic one, and *"... always retained its individualistic flavour"* (Watson 1980: 36).   Given the one-to-one relationship he envisaged, Taylor (1911) stressed the importance of interpersonal skills saying that:

"No system of management, however good, should be applied in a wooden way. The proper personal relationships should always be maintained between the employers and men; and even the prejudices of the workmen should be considered in dealing with them".

10. Human nature model

Was scientific management underpinned by a clear picture of the nature of man? Taylor's basic assumption about workers was that they were lazy and attempted to do as little work as possible. In the light of this assessment, the answer which scientific management offered to the problem of worker management was the bureaucratization of the structure of control. This solution has been applied through to the present day.

" ... the modern large corporation is in a line of direct descent from the early ideas of scientific management, especially those ideas emphasising the planning function within organizations. Taylorism, in modified forms, has become the orthodox doctrine of technical control in contemporary industrial capitalism."

Clegg and Dunkerley (1980: 97)

Taylor's views about human nature can be gleaned from his writings. Apart from a kind of Calvanistic work ethic and a trust in monetary incentives, Taylor did not include any motivational terms in his model. The essential ability to work was taken as given by him. He wrote that first class men were not only willing but glad to work at their maximum speed provided that they were paid between 30% and 100% more than the average for their trade. His guiding motivational principle was that money and personal ambition were more powerful incentives than exhortation. The Taylorian model of human nature was, as Simon (1958) pointed out, a machine model. Taylor

and his engineering colleagues approached the organization from a mechanistic frame of reference. The organizational member was considered a tool of production.

11. Quick fix potential

Exceptional performance improvement results were often obtained by Taylor and his followers in a very short time. They redesigned individual tasks and the relationships between the production tasks. As early as 1911, the cost savings obtained at the Bethleham steelworks confirmed the effectiveness of scientific management. The number of employees was reduced from 500 to 140, and output per man rose from 16 tons to 59 tons per day. This resulted in a reduction in cost handling from $0.072 to $0.033 per ton. The savings achieved by the application of Taylor's ideas were between $75,000 - 80,000 at 1911 prices. In the years that followed, the appeal of scientific management rested on the quick pay-off that the application of time and motion studies produced.

12. Contribution/ownership appeal

Every application of scientific management principles had to be customised to meet the prevailing circumstances of the company implementing it. Thus, each implementing manager could claim to have made a unique and personal contribution to the application of Taylor's scientific management principles.

13. Leadership focus

Watson (1986: 93) argued that the early advocates of work specialization did not have much to say about how the work was to be "managed" or about "leadership" per se. Littler (1982) felt that scientific management had no clear idea of the problems or means of re-integrating the fragmented job roles. To manage the fragmented work, managers would need to ensure that all the planning and allocation of work was done by themselves, that all the

work would be monitored and allocated times and that a payment-by-results system would be introduced to motivate the workers to apply themselves to maximum effort in terms of output. Leadership under Taylor's formulation was a matter of applying science, and motivation was a matter of offering a financial return commensurate with the steady application of effort to the tasks designed by managers. Thus, as conceived of here, Taylor's version of leadership was not concerned with the personal power or the vision creation that we come to associate with the concept today.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

The primary focus of this management idea family was the determination of what types of specialization and hierarchy would optimize the efficiency of organizations. The application of these two concepts produced a very mechanistic form of organizational design which paid little attention to people and which saw them as cogs in a wheel. Administrative management is built around four key pillars. These are the division of labour; the scalar and functional processes; organizational structure; and the span of control. Additional concepts include discipline; unity of command; unity of direction; remuneration; subordination of the individual interest to the general interest; centralization; and esprit de corps.

The writer most closely, although not exclusively associated with this management idea system was Henri Fayol. Fayol spent his career in a French mining company and rose to the post of managing director. He believed that the techniques of successful management could be described and taught, and that managerial organization was as valid an area of study as worker organization. Fayol sought to discover a body of principles which would enable a manager to build up the formal structure of the organization and to administer it in a rational way. To quote Mouzalis (1967: 89).

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"The solution to this problem, according to the theory lies in the discovery of a set of principles which, when correctly applied to the particular situation, will prove invaluable guides to the construction of a rational-efficient framework for management".

The original diffusers of administrative management ideas were not social science or business school faculty but consultants and other managers. Once administrative management had established itself in this way, it passed into management history, and began to feature extensively in textbooks, was taught by management teachers to students.

Those who followed Fayol refined these concepts and added to them, often stressing some particular point or theme. Mooney and Riley (1931) for example, emphasised the "co-ordinative principle" seeing it as the central one. They laid particular stress upon the scalar principle - the process within an organization whereby authority was co-ordinated from the top. Other classical writers such as Gulick and Urwick developed the notion of rationalizing the work process by bringing it together in as centralised an area as possible.

The assumptions of the administrative management have received extensive critical analysis. They have been been subjected to intensive research. Nevertheless, the majority of practices recommended by this idea system continue to be central to the way in which modern organizations are organized. While some of the principles advocated by the administrative management writers may have been defective, their overall scheme for building machine-like bureaucracies with managers and officials strongly in control, has continued to be applied over time. Administrative management is not a historical fossil but represents a major model for the design of large highly integrated organizations of today.

The criticism that the proponents of administrative management have received has centred around the status of the principles which they expound. Some of these describe management activities, while others indicate what managers should be doing and exhort them to do things in a certain way.

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Occasionally, amongst the writings, one finds an expression of a relationship between organizational variables ("The narrower the span of control, the more levels of hierarchy there will be").

Criticism of the principles came thick and fast. March and Simon described them as little more than ambiguous and mutually contradictory proverbs" (March and Simon, 1958: Chapter 2); "... *simple minded deductions"* wrote Perrow (1973). *"They form neither a coherent conceptualization pattern of determination nor an accurate description of concrete reality"* said Clegg and Dunkerley (1980: 102). Despite failing all the tests set for them by academics, the principles of administrative management, like those of scientific management, have had a major and continuing effect on management thought and practice. Even their most hardened critics have had to admit that,

> *"Although these formal theories of scientific management and administration do not have many supporters in today's ranks of social scientists concerned with analysisng organizations, they have been enormously influential in shaping and structuring organizations historically, and in many cases down to the present day".*

Clegg and Dunkerley (1980: 105)

Administrative management may have indeed been scorned by social scientists. Nevertheless, there is a highly successful, durable and expanding business of management consulting as well as an endless series of successful management books, which rest upon the principles of administrative management.

Fayol began the task of listing the principles of administrative management and others went on to continue his work. Administrative management is a label which refers to a body of writing which has received contributions from many different authors at different times. These include Urwick, Brech, Allan and many others. This idea-system lacks much of the logical

consistency of some of the others. Nevertheless, despite its contradictions, it does share a core number of common characteristics with other popular idea families.

Perhaps the basic reason for the original popularity of administrative management was that it addressed itself directly to the real and pressing problems of managers during the early decades of this century. However, this reason alone does not explain why it has survived and has maintained its popularity over the subsequent sixty years.

1.   Management control

Administrative management writers have attempted to synthesise their experiences into an easily learned set of principles, prescriptions and rules. They hoped that these would allow managers to control and improve organizational performance. In this model, the organization was seen as an instrument for producing a profit for its owners, while the purpose of management was to convert inputs (capital, labour, materials) into profit by the exercise of managerial control.

Barnard (1938: 83) who was one of the major figures in administrative management, argued that a major role of the executive was to ensure, "... *the willingness of persons to contribute efforts to the co-operative system"*. In his view, material inducements were insufficient to achieve the optimum level of co-operation. Thus managers needed to preserve what he called, *"the fiction of superior authority"* which ensured *"... a presumption among individuals in favour of the acceptability of orders from superiors. "*

2.   Management legitimation

The most fundamental of all administrative management concepts was authority - the right to get things done. The administrative management writers were keen to legitimate their position of influence. It is in this light that one needs to consider their major proposition that authority originates entirely from ownership. The supporters of this view saw authority as being

given by the owners to the board of directors who in turn delegated it to the managing director, and from thereon it went down the management chain. The possession of formal authority in the chain of command was considered by the proponents of this school, to be sufficient to enable a manager to get people to work effectively.

In his book, *"Administration Industrielle et General"*, published in French in 1916, (Fayol, 1949) identified six functions in the operation of any enterprise. One of these six was administration. This function was concerned with setting up general programmes of activities and creating a social structure. Fayol viewed this as a highly intellectual and moral function. He wrote about the importance of the identification of management, organization or administration as a distinct function to be studied and practised in its own right.

Fayol took a clear managerial perspective in his writings with a pre-occupation with management problems. While he did not explain how organizations actually worked, he did offer a vision of how some managers would like them to work. The view that was promulgated by the administrative management writers was that the continued existence of success of all organizations depended on decisions being made and tasks being completed. This overriding purpose placed the organizational structure in a control process perspective. The manager was regarded as a problem-solver or the controller of a system who engaged in planning, execution, motivation, adjustment, and in making choices.

More recent representatives of the administrative management school, such as Dale (1965), viewed managers as functionally necessary facilitators and co-ordinators of the actions of others. Such a view is derived from a concept of management as a universal feature of social organization. Management is about *"getting things done through people"* (Dale 1965: 5). In his opinion, the elements of managerial work (planning, organizing, co-ordinating, motivating, controlling) are determined by the universality of management. He assumed that the form and organization of management was essentially unproblematic and historically constant. The implication was that without management's presence, little or nothing would ever get done.

3.   Guarantee of pay-off

The major variable in the design of jobs, said the administrative management writers, was the minimalization of immediate production costs. This was achieved by specialising skills in order to reduce skill requirements. This is turn reduced learning times. Underlying the principles of the idea was the basic economic assumption that the concentration of effort on a limited field of endeavour increased the quantity and the quality of the output. The greatest pay-off obtained was in the specialization of work which was greatly increased.

4.   Steps or principles

Whatever the exact nature of the rules, principles or precepts was, they were all phrased in a very concrete and practical way. Written by managers for managers, they were manifestly capable of being applied. To use Kelly's (1980: 54) term, administrative management *"... offered a step by step guide ... for getting things done in management".*

5.   Communicability

Being developed and promoted by managers and management consultants, the principles of administrative management were clearly understood by the managers to whom they were introduced. Few appeared to either notice their contradictory nature or, if they did, seemed capable of explaining it away to themselves. Each principle was specific and unequivocal. Their appeal lay in them having been developed out of management practice.

6.   Unitary perspective

Fayol's formulation was fundamentally one of consensus. Employees were seen as coming to work primarily to maximise their wages and the job of management was to design jobs, the organization and the payment system, in such a way that if people worked hard then they would be rewarded. If

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management had done its job properly then the increased efforts of workers would mean greater productivity and this would lead to higher profits. Everybody benefited. The workers received higher wages, the owners secured higher dividends, and the managers would be pleased to know that they had done a job well. Fayol emphasised the necessity for harmonious co-ordination between the parts of the company in the interests of what he called the "organic whole". Writing about the administrative management school, Woodward (1965: 242) noted that this management idea took more or less for granted:

> "... that people who join an employing organization either accept it and its purposes, or can be educated to do so, with the result that they will behave in a way that advances organizational goals."

7.   Universal application

Authors claimed universal applicability for the principles of administrative management. They were descriptions of what should happen rather than of reality. Lupton (1976: 131) referred to the assumptions of structural universalism which held that if the injunctions are followed, they will lead to efficiency, *"whatever or wherever the organization"*. Urwick (1937: 49) stated that,

> "... there are principles which can be arrived at inductively from the study of human experience of organization, which should govern arrangements for human associations of any kind. These principles can be studied as a technical question, irrespective of the purpose of the enterprise, the personnel comprising it or any constitutional, political or social theory underlying its creation".

Underlying much of administrative management was the assumption that basic similarities in the structure and processes of organizations could be identified, conceptually analysed, and made explicit. The universally

applicable principles of management thereby distilled, would replace the traditional, intuitive, rules-of-thumb which were currently in use. Honor and Mainwaring observed that administrative management writers,

> *"... were concerned to draw lessons from their experience which would be of universal applicability to work organizations. They were concerned predominantly to promote the efficient use of all resources in pursuit of what they perceived to be clearly defined goals."*

<div align="right">Honour and Mainwaring (1982: 69)</div>

Fayol's aim was to develop a universal doctrine of administration and he thus saw his principles as being valid in all circumstances, regardless of the technology in use or of the environmental context of the organization.

8.   Authorization

The commonsense logic of the administrative management principles were appealing. Their usefulness as guides to management actions appeared self-evident. They represented helpful approximations of what went on in organizations and they possessed face validity. Mouzalis (1967: 95) saw administrative management writers as attempting to, *"... to elaborate principles of sound management in a commonsense manner".* Since the principles themselves were based on the observations of actual organizations by different writers, it is not surprising that there was such a close correspondence between the evolved trial-and -error practices in organizations and the principles propounded by those who studied and who wrote about them.

9. Individual perspective

March and Simon (1958) summarised the way in which administrative management viewed organizational members. They were seen as *"inert instruments performing the tasks assigned to them"* (p.29). Administrative management ignored factors associated with individual behaviour, and in particular, with its motivational bases. People were viewed as a given, rather than as a variable in the system. The implication of this was that existing personnel could be easily removed. The capacities of people and machines depended on which machines were used and how the people were trained.

10. Human nature model

The underlying assumption made by the creators of administrative management was that man would, within respectable tolerances, behave rationally. That is, he would act as the formal plan required him to do. The most basic property of formal organization said the administrative management writers, was its essential rationality. The task of the organizer, according to Fayol, was to create a logically ordered world in which there was proper order and in which which there was a place for everything and everything was in its place.

Fayol considered that motivation depended on money, job design, discipline and supervision. Administrative management organizational designs generally conformed to what McGregor later labelled Theory X assumptions. The planner did have to take into account the human element. However, in this conception, motivation was considered more of a question of organizational design than supervisory skill. Any such adjustments to deal with people represented *"temporary deviations from the pattern in order to deal with idiosyncrasy of personality"* said Urwick. People should be loyal to the formal structure if it was to work effectively. Fayol emphasised this by stressing <u>esprit de corps</u>. In administrative management, wrote Simon and March (1958), the employee was viewed as an inert instrument performing the tasks assigned to him.

11. Quick fix potential

Administrative management offered a clear and direct improvement in the way organizations were run. In some ways they were the only ones on offer. They drew heavily upon the largest and most successful organizations of their time - the armed forces and the church. By applying the principles, managers would immediately and significantly improve the performance of their own organization.

12. Contribution or ownership potential

In reviewing the literature no evidence was found to suggest that the appeal of administrative management could be attributed to the way that managers could modify and customise it. The general observation can of course be made that with so many principles on offer, managers could select which ones suited both their organizational circumstances and their own personal ends. However, it would be difficult to be firmer on this aspect of the administrative management idea.

13. Leadership focus

Administrative management writers tended to think of "leadership" in terms of the qualities required of a good leader. The effect of the principles of management propounded, said Argyris (1957), was to make employees dependent upon, and passive towards, and subordinate to the leader. Recognising this problem, administrative management recommended having technically competent, objective, rational, and loyal leaders. Being technically competent, these leaders would not have the "wool pulled over their eyes". Their objectivity and rationality would reflect that interest in the formal structure and would prevent them becoming emotionally involved. The leader had to be impartial and loyal when evaluating others so that he could inculcate that same loyalty into his subordinates.

HUMAN RELATIONS

Butler (1986: 104) argued that human relations arose from the American wish to humanize their society without interfering with the free operation of market forces. In his view, the human relations promised land was one in which everybody accepted that it was socially and economically desirable that there should be the greatest degree of competition outside of the firm, but that any competitive or contentious elements within it were both socially and economically undesirable.

It would be incorrect to see human relations as a reaction to scientific management or to describe it as re-discovering the social aspects of work which scientific management ignored. This is indeed the popular description contained in many introductory management and industrial sociology textbooks. There is however an alternative and equally convincing explanation. Taylor may well have known about the potential dangers for management of work groups. In place of his attempt to destroy work group solidarity, the human relations writers prescribed an alternative tactic, but one which nevertheless sought to achieve the same goal. That goal was to control the work group and the means was to integrate it into the organization. In this respect the human relations idea of personnel counselling (as a way of countering trade unionism in the United States) had a particularly significant effect. This focus on people also meant that fundamental structural re-designs were avoided. The critical writers would argue that human relations represented a change of management tactics rather than any fundamental shift in objectives.

The human relations movement drew heavily on the academic sustenance of a series of famous experiments called the Hawthorne studies. The Hawthorne studies refer to a series of research projects which began in 1924 at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric company located in Cicero, just outside of Chicago. They are linked with the name of a Harvard Business School professor called Elton Mayo whose involvement in the work has been the subject of much controversy. The initial aim of the research was to examine the relationship between working conditions and output.

At the beginning, the investigators adopted a physiological approach. Early results however suggested that variables such as illumination could not be treated independently of the meanings that workers gave to them. The researchers concluded that economic motives were relatively unimportant in motivating workers and in raising productivity. Rather, they argued, solidarity was the key. Subsequent research was carried out using interviewing and non-participative data collection methods. Conclusions were drawn about supervisory styles and the existence of an informal organization. Names such as the Relay Assembly Test Room, the Bank Wiring Room, and the Mica Splitting Group passed into social science research folklore and history. Nevertheless, the Hawthorne studies remain amongst the most diverse and most controversial pieces of social science research ever conducted.

Human relations never de-railed the original ideological thrust of Taylorism. In fact, Mayo wrote two articles, one in 1924 and a second in 1925, for the Taylor Society Bulletin. Davis presented a succinct definition of the "human relations ideology". The notion of happy workers being productive workers which the following quote implies, suggests that in, Patzig and Zimmerman's (1985) terms, Davis offered a pseudo-historic version of the Hawthorne findings:

> "... human relations is the integration of people into a work situation that motivates them to work together productively, co-operatively, and with economic, psychological and social satisfactions ... human relations is motivating people in organizations to develop teamwork which effectively fulfils their needs and achieves organizational objectives ... Human relations is motivating people to develop productive, fulfilling teamwork."

> Davis (1967: 5-6)

The way in which the human relations writers reported and interpreted the Hawthorne studies persuaded many managers that friendly and relaxed supervision in the factory would result in higher productivity. Even though

the causal link may have been in reverse direction (high productivity creating a relaxed supervisory atmosphere), managers tended to see things as they wished to see them. In popular management mythology, human relations came down to, "being nice to workers". Reduced to its essentials, the human relations message was carried by six propositions:

1. A focus on people, rather than upon mechanics or economics.

2. People exist in an organizational environment rather an unorganized social context.

3. A key activity in human relations is motivating people.

4. Motivation should be directed towards teamwork whichequires both the co-ordination and the co-operation of the individuals involved.

5. Human relations, through teamwork, seeks to fulfil both individual and organizational objectives simultaneously.

6. Both individuals and organizations share a desire for efficiency, that is, they try to achieve maximum results with minimum inputs.

The growth of human relations was fostered by the problem of motivating employees, that is, of persuading them to share the goals of the organization. When in the 1920s and 1930s Mayo addressed himself to the problem of workers not behaving in the way managements would like, he convinced managers of the idea that the way to deal with this difficulty was to retain both hierarchy and specialization while forming the equivalent of the "family" in the workplace. Authoritarianism would remain but would take

the guise of a paternalistic interest in the worker who would respond in a filial manner. The family concept gave further justification to treating competition between departments in the same company as taboo.

Instead of conveying the depressing message that informal groups worked against management wishes, Mayo became the hero of the age by providing a new gospel. Managers could smile once more and could hope to manipulate the informal group. The solution that he offered was simple. Because the worker's need to belong was so obsessive, his emotions would lead him to espouse the cause of any group which had exhibited social concern for him. The worker was therefore psychologically vulnerable to capture. The informal group captured the individual but the firm could capture the informal group. Mayo had the formula with which to do this. All the previously bad references to groups were wiped clean and, as far as management was concerned, group theory began (again) with Mayo.

The reception given to Mayo's message by managers showed that they, as much as workers, were ready to welcome the psychological safety of a comforting myth. Watson (1986) argued that the "so-called evidence" of human relations ideas was regularly and heavily interpreted to fit the beliefs and hunches which derived from Mayo's political preferences and social beliefs. The Hawthorne studies, wrote Watson, could best be viewed as an instructive test of half truth stories. Like any myth, it mixed fiction, exaggeration and one-sidedness, with an element of truth.

What is of particular relevance to this thesis is the appeal of human relations to managers which was considerable. It offered an edifice of scientifically acquired evidence in support of the most satisfactory (managerial) conclusion that, *"the requisite skills could release the enthusiasm for co-operation with management which work groups possessed as the result of their deep-felt need for belonging"* (Child 1969a: 116).

The *"human relations fad"* as Argyris (1957: 13) termed it, was prompted by a number of factors, only one of which were the research studies themselves. The authors of the studies, Mayo, Roethlisberger and Dickson, presented evidence to managers to show that productivity and human relations were closely related. If workers could be helped "to belong", human relations

would be improved, and the workers made more productive. A second potent factor was the growth of unionism. This revealed to management the extent of worker discontent. Much of this was blamed on poor management. The third factor, according to Argyris, was the development amongst managers, of a sense of responsibility. Additional factors cited included an increase in the size of organizations which caused a lack of communication between top and bottom levels. There was the greater specialization in work organization and the technical developments. Both created human problems. Increased labour costs encouraged management to make full use of labour while the higher standard of living permitted an emphasis on human factors. As will be argued in greater detail in Chapter 3, the time was right for human relations ideas to take off.

The remainder of this section will consider the reasons for the popularity of human relations as reformulated by its propagandists. There will not be a critical examination of the Hawthorne research findings, methodology or the conclusions based upon the data collected. Such issues have been dealt with by other writers and include the question of Mayo's involvement in the investigations (Smith, 1975; Rose, 1978); the change of research emphasis away from the physical and towards social factors (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1964); the importance of supervisory style (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1964; Whitehead, 1938; Mayo, 1933; Homans, 1951); the weakness of the research design (Rose, 1978); and the re-evaluation of the conclusions (Carey, 1967; Argyle, 1953; Perrow, 1972).

Human relations represented just the first of many attempts to bring social science into the service of management. Despite endless disappointments the applications continue to this day because of the hope that is offered. First the hope of increased **efficiency.** That social science can produce an unparalleled co-operation in the workplace that will transcend or utilize conflict, and potentially displace the necessity and rationale for trade unions. Second, there is the hope of **satisfaction.** This is, the belief that efficiency will bring about the possibility of achieving the satisfaction of deep human needs at work at no cost to the employer. Third and last, there is the hope of **management contribution.** That is, that the achievement of efficiency and satisfaction will be attained by a newly enlightened and expert management

in command of the total technical, social and human environment. Through its control of work, management will control human happiness, fulfilment and even perhaps sanity.

1.   Management control

In terms of organizational control, even human relations ideas which advocated participation and alluded to "power equalization", did not seriously challenge the essentially hierarchical character of control in organizations (Dickson, 1981).   It has been argued that human relations offered a more subtle form of persuasion to replace the somewhat crude devices offered by the scientific management writers.   It was human relations's contribution to management control and ideology which was one of its main appealing features.   The following authors support this interpretation:

> *"What the human relations theorists did was to produce a highly developed ideological apparatus of normative control, of hegemony, for the management of organizations ... From this perspective then, the Human Relations movement has significance not as a body of scientific findings of a highly dubious nature, but as part of the apparatus whereby organizations attempt to impose and maintain control of production."*

Clegg and Dunkerley (1980: 135)

Mant made the same point,

> *"... the new stratagem was 'leadership' loosely translated as persuasion. The best way to outfox the unions was to render junior management more persuasive better at selling notions of "common purpose","teamwork", through "leadership and communications" (downwards of course) and "human relations skills".*

Mant (1979: 54)

Miles felt that, human relations was,

> *"... a comfortable collection of concepts and prescriptions, promising to allow the manager to retain his role as controller of the system while minimizing conflict and gaining the compliance of a loyal, perhaps devoted, group of subordinates."*

<div align="right">Miles (1975: 223-4)</div>

In their advice to managers, Roethlisberger and Dickson suggested that managers focused on the ways in which the informal system could be manipulated so that,

> *"... workers are likely to develop a spontaneous type of informal organization, which will not only express more adequately their own values and significance, but is more likely to be in harmony with the aims of management".*

<div align="right">Roethlisberger and Dickson (1964: 561-2)</div>

Reich (1984) claimed that managers drew the conclusion from human relations writings that production workers needed to feel that they were involved in the enterprise and respected as individuals. Since actual participation and personal respect were impracticable, the job of the manager was seen as being to manufacture the <u>appearance</u> of involvement and respect. Clegg summarised Mayo's solution to the problem of managerial control:

> *"... the proposal of persuasion in the guise of new forms of solidarity to replace those destroyed by individual processes of de-skilling and isolation introduced by the combined effects of Taylorism and Fordism".*

<div align="right">Clegg (1979: 132)</div>

2. Management legitimation

Bendix's (1963) view was that the human relations movement produced a theoretical approach to understanding work behaviour which provided a managerial ideology most fitted to an American inter-war period when trade union representation was increasing and when management was on the defensive. The change from small to large sized enterprises was accompanied by a corresponding shift in the ideological justification advanced for managerial authority. Hard work and superior ability had been the authority base.

However, growth in size meant that advancing within a company (rather than establishing one's own) began to be an avenue to success. The importance of technical skills declined, as that of interpersonal ones rose. Management ideology therefore became justified not upon the Puritan values of hard work or even enterprise, but upon the ability to handle human relations effectively. Industrial problems came to be seen as human relations ones offering career advancement to those who possessed the new techniques which allowed them to co-ordinate a growing and increasingly specialised workforce.

Mant (1979) argued that junior managers and supervisors were expected to absorb the shocks in exchange for the right of entry to the illusionary brotherhood of management. Human relations theory, in his view, offered a unified vision of management with no internal divisions. Many years earlier, Baritz (1975) had written that Mayo had had an unshakeable conviction that managers in the United States comprised an elite who had the ability and therefore the right, to rule the rest of the nation. He pointed out for instance, that many of America's managers were "... *remarkable men without prejudice*" (Mayo 1933). This was an irresistible message for managers.

There is more supporting evidence for the legitimatory function of human relations theory. Bendix (1963) viewed the development of the human relations approach as designed to justify managerial authority in the workplace by promoting the idea that managers were attending to their employees' needs for psychologically rewarding work experiences. He demonstrated that the promotion of the theory was associated with higher levels of bureaucratization within the organization.

More specifically, human relations, with its particular approach to motivation which emphasised the importance of management incentives and controls, peer group social forces, social satisfactions and output norms, acted to dramatically increase the centrality of the role of the supervisor. The onus for securing worker performance was placed largely on his shoulders. Human relations theory therefore greatly enhanced the role and status of supervisory and general management. There is a high degree of agreement on this point, even though different writers express it in different ways,

"Human relations had suggested answers to managers faced with difficult workers and offered them membership of an 'elite of paternally benevolent administrators' ... Mayo fashioned the manager in his own image, and the manager returned the compliment".

Rose (1978: 124)

"... Mayo was anxious to develop an effective and scientifically informed management elite".

Watson (1980: 43)

Watson (1980: 187) argued that the managers of organizations, although not necessarily acting as an organized group in society at large, did have certain objective interests in common by virtue of *"... the common problems and experiences"* to which they were exposed. Whenever enterprises were set up, a few commanded and many obeyed. The few however, were seldom satisfied to command without higher justification even when they abjured all interests in ideas. Even where knowledge was developed with an ostensibly purely technical purpose, as with much of the writing about organizations, it tended nevertheless to be framed in such a way so as to meet a particular management group's need.

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Such views about management were thus "partial" in that they strove to be consistent with the way in which managers preferred to see (and preferred others to see), the enterprise. Much organizational theory, therefore, paralleled a great deal of published managerial thinking to which it was closely related. Child (1969b) pointed out that management thought had both a legitimatory and a technical function. The former was primarily linked to the securing of social integration and approval for managerial authority and the way in which it is used. The latter was primarily linked to the search for practical means of rendering that authority maximally effective. There is then a difference between the Hawthorne studies and what Mayo subsequently wrote. It was Mayo's flamboyant writings which gained the acceptance of managers and which formed the basis of later American management theory.

Mayo's argument in his book, The Human Problems of Industrial Civilization, was that human collaboration at work had always required a "non-logical social code" which, unfortunately, had been destroyed by social and technological change. To re-establish equilibrium in individuals and society, these non-logical impulses (social sentiments) had to be re-created in industrial work groups. Thus Mayo gave to management the key role of manipulating social harmony through the application of counselling and leadership skills. Lewin was later to develop Mayo's ideas in at least one direction by arguing that if individuals responded to forces, then managers (as an important focus for such communication) had to exert those forces which shaped worker behaviour.

In his model, Miles (1975) described the manager's role as including responsibility not only for the technical system but also for the human system. Thus, the model recognized that human beings may not be wholly satisfied by fair treatment and equitable pay alone. Hence, the manager's role was not only that of controller. He was also expected to take preventative steps to ensure that employees were co-operative and compliant.

3. Guarantee of pay-off

In order to be able to shape the behaviour of workers, managers had to acquire the necessary skills. What was the pay-off to them of doing so? Rose suggested that:

> *"The Lewinians were beginning to realise the Mayoite aim: leaders (managers) they showed, through communication (social skills), could manipulate participation (informal organization) to produce a superior group climate (morale), thus enhancing satisfaction (integration) with the group life (social system) and improving performance (output)".*

<div align="right">

Rose (1978: 163)

</div>

Perhaps the most important of human relations thinking was in the field of supervisory and junior management training schemes. These schemes, which became very popular across a range of organizations, tended to emphasise the importance of *communication* and the *careful handling of people*. Instead of altering work organization, existing structures were maintained intact, and marginally humanised through more sensitive people management. The pay-off was the ability of management to claim it has made major changes when in fact it had not.

4. Steps or principles

Human relations theory did offer a series of suggestions which were specific enough to permit implementation. For example, it recommended the application of a participative style of leadership in which the supervisor would exercise authority in an "approved" (i.e. paternalistic) manner. It recommended the training of managers in the acquisition of such techniques. Other recommendations included the building up of communication, making

allowances for the influence of informal groups, and offering a quasi-clinical counselling service to allow employees to let off steam (Wilensky and Wilensky, 1952).

5.   **Communicability**

Human relations ideas were easily grasped by managers. This was was due both to the limited number of key ideas offered, and also to the fact that the teachings of Mary Parker Follett and Mayo were interpreted by managers as both saying that the "human side of management" involved, in essence, a process of personal persuasive leadership. British management writers of the 1930s were already coming to interpret Follett in practical terms not at all dissimilar to the recommendations of the Mayo scheme. Indeed, according to Child (1969b), the whole continuity of human relations in British management thought was expressed far more in terms of recommended managerial methods, than in the finer points of conceptual analysis. It was this continuity at the level of technique which helps to explain how management thought was so readily able to absorb ideas expressed in such diverse values as the Quaker employers, Mary Parker Follett and Elton Mayo.

6.   **Unitary perspective**

A review of the literature indicates a near unanimous consensus on the proposition that human relations theory was a unitary philosophy which promoted the view that there were no fundamental conflicts of interest between employers and workers. It is a tenet of human relations that there were no "win-lose" situations. Everyone could in fact win. This was because the application of the ideas improved both efficiency and productivity which created a larger pie to be shared. It has been argued that the strategies of human relations (continually refined after the Hawthorne experiments) and still regarded by many as an alternative to scientific management), were simply an attempt to establish community relationships in the context of sub-divided labour, unquestioned management authority over job design and

planning, management evaluation of performance and wage payment, and unchanged hierarchies of power. Coser, a leading theorist of the nature of conflict in society, concluded that the Mayoite studies showed,

> "... *no recognition of the existence of realistic conflict or its functions. Behaviour which is the outcome of a conflict situation is almost exclusively dealt with as non-realistic behaviour.*"

> Coser (1956: 49 and 52)

The effect of this was to see conflict as a failure which management could sort out, usually by "improving communications", by recognising informal groups and infiltrating them with lower level management (supervisors). Then, all the causes of conflict would disappear. Trade unions and industrial relations were removed from any position of importance thereby allowing management to achieve a representative role in its relationship with its workers. Recognising that management's position was defined by its dependence upon subordinates, it had to claim total effective control of its relationship with them.

The central role attributed to conflict and to non-realistic or non-rational behaviour in Mayo's vision, parallel's in the eyes of some writers, the view held by Communist regimes. That is, the conviction that protest against the system is, by itself, an indication of the poor mental state of the protester meriting his hospitalization in a psychiatric hospital. Is this an exaggeration? Farber (1982) reviewed the human relations principles and the material and moral incentives used in the Communist world. He demonstrated that both assumed a basic harmony of interests between their employees and managers; and ignored both the fact that work incentives were used in combination with coercion, and that the workplace itself was run in an undemocratic manner.

The work group resistance discovered in the Bank Wiring Room was deemed to stem from the workers misunderstanding of management intentions. Lupton (1963) traced the widespread acceptance of this belief to the Hawthorne research and to the human relations movement which followed it.

These writings interpreted output restriction in terms of the <u>social</u> requirements of sustaining a group structure. Lupton argued that the conflict of interests could be genuine and not merely an irrational response of workers. Their behaviour, he said, really was a response to <u>managerial control</u> and was best understood as a counter-attempt to assert workers' own control (Lupton 1963: 6).

There is evidence to show that Mayo promulgated the view about the harmony of interests even more vigorously than Taylor. He did not even allow for Taylor's limited awareness that some differences might exist. Since Mayo saw no conflict, he rejected both unions and the need for any form of collective bargaining. Mayo, no more than Taylor, questioned the fundamental organization of capitalism, especially in regard to those who sold their labour power. Watson (1986) is one of many modern writers who argues that Mayo ignored the basic economic conflict of interest which exists between the employers and the employed.

It is generally acknowledged that the recommendations that Mayo made about the company social system were intended to create cohesive social groups, and thereby to integrate managerial with worker goals. His teachings emphasised the <u>doctrine of human co-operation</u>. Within this context, conflict came to be seen as an evil to be removed and to be replaced by harmony. All conflict was treated as being of the same type and was held to occur as a result of the lack of social skills. Conflict was considered to be the cause of poor performance. The way to increase productivity therefore was for the manager to smooth out all the conflicts and to re-establish harmonious working relationships. Perrow asked whether,

> "... *such conflicts of interests and inequalities of power might be solved better by face-to-face relations between workers and management, or by the famous counselling system which seemed doubtful.*"

<div align="right">Perrow (1972: 103)</div>

Critics argued that the emphasis on harmony and the neglect of conflict was the result of Mayo's pro-capitalist management bias (Kerr and Fisher, 1957). In Mant's view, human relations',

> "... essential lure was the implicit fantasy that industrial administration might be conflict free (everybody has a share) if only people would co-operate and pull together, if only the "whole person" could be engaged wholeheartedly in work, if only the foreman had leadership. It was an agreeable, fantastic, "if only" sort of world view, in which the unions were necessarily cast as obdurate, destructive and reactionary; and so, in time, they became."

> Mant (1979: 55)

The co-operation envisaged, said the critics, was to be on management terms and in management's image.

7.   Universal application

Mayo believed that harmony and co-operation was the natural state of organizations in which workers gave freely of their commitment. Where this was not happening, barriers must exist to the giving of that wholehearted support. It was the job of management everywhere to identify and remove those barriers. Since barriers of this type existed in all organizations, the principles of human relations must be applicable to all organizations.

> "... when the social skills of the supervisor were found to influence group morale, not only were such findings considered to be applicable to all groups, but also to the organization as a whole".

> Mouzalis (1967: 116)

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Human relations considered all organizations to be alike (Likert 1967: 241) and any differences, for example in terms of markets, technology, were viewed as irrelevant.

8.   Authorization

On what basis of authority did the human relations writers promulgate their ideas?   Clegg and Dunkerley (1980) attributed to Mayo the growth in the use of training techniques intended to improve human relations skills and the "vast and overwhelmingly ideological literature" on subjects such as leadership and planning change in organizations. There was of course the Hawthorne research but the critics claimed that,

> *"Much of the literature spawned by early developments of human relations studies is now regarded as ideological and unscientific."*

> Clegg and Dunkerley (1980: 13)

The face validity of human relations and its commonsense appeal should not be ignored.   Mayo promised greater output, the workers' devotion to the manager and social prestige for him.   *"Somehow"*, said Rose (1978: 124), *"his proposals for securing them rang true"*.   His ideas also had the backing of the research and the publications of the Hawthorne studies themselves. Although observers may now question the degree of empirical support for human relations,   at the time, it was the biggest piece of industrial social science research ever conducted.

9.   Individualistic perspective

Human relations aimed to restore the individual with his needs and drives, to a central place from which Weberian bureaucracy and administrative management had removed him. Miller and Form (1964:8) wrote that the human relations tended to atomize the human relations in work groups by

treating them as if they were attributes of individual group members. It consequently ignored the organized network of social relations that characterized group structures.

In some of Mayo's writings (Mayo, 1949) there was a holistic perspective which sought to explain behaviour in terms of society rather than by reference to human nature or people's instincts. However, Mayo and his followers did encourage a psychologistic orientation and this is the one that has secured the greatest popularity and which continues to be written about and taught today. Mayo achieved this by emphasising the importance of supervisory skills at the lower levels of the organization. The effect of this was to distract attention away from the issues of structural, technological or economic conflicts, and direct it towards the question of how to establish worker commitment.

In the end, the question of how individuals related to each other was held to be more important than the way in which their economic, social and task relationships were structured. Honour and Mainwaring (1982: 73) argued that Roethlisberger and Dickson explained worker attitudes in terms of a complex systems model in which facts and sentiments were distinguished. This suggests that "distorted" complaints by employees were signs of their social disequilibrium. These writers identified the spontaneous, unplanned, informal system, and argued that it was a maintenance or interference factor in both the personal and the organizational balance. This perspective emphasized the analysis of meaning at the level of the individual actor.

Since the grievances of workers were held to be irrational and based on sentiments, management's job was to deal with the emotional and social needs of the workers. If it was successful, it could hope to achieve increased output and harmonious working relationships. The key to understanding individual behaviour was held to lie in the way in which the informal group socialised its members into a particular set of norms and values. The human relations movement, "... *sought to find ways to increase productivity by manipulating social factors"* (Perrow 1972: 104).

Crudely summarised, if the group manipulated the individual in demonstrating certain group-supported behaviour (e.g. restriction of output), then it was legitimate for management to fight back. Mayo's research offered managers guidelines on have to influence individual behaviour so as to achieve management goals. The strategies included widening the individual's loyalty from the group so as to encompass the company as a whole. It involved replacing irrational and negative sentiments with positive ones.

10.   Human nature model

At the heart of human relations as described in the management textbooks, was a view of the worker as a social animal. His needs and drives were affected as much by the other people around him as they were by his own innate motives. To understand the worker, said Mayo, one needed to see him as an individual acting within a group. It is from this basic view that sprung the emphasis on the management of the informal group, the meeting of social needs and the training of foremen in human relations skills.

Mayo's ideas for better human relations said Argyris (1957: 142), related to management's dominant assumption that employees were lazy and apathetic. It therefore followed that they needed rejuvenating, motivating, inspiring, and generally "firing with enthusiasm". This approach was based on the notion that a selling approach was effective with people. The messages that managers communicated to employees acted to inspire them. Schein summarised the four tenets upon which this perspective was founded:

> 1. *Social needs are the prime motivator of human behaviour and inter-personal relationships the prime shaper of a sense of identity.*

> 2. *As a result of mechanization entailed in the Industrial Revolution, work has lost much of its intrinsic meaning, which now must be sought in social relationships on the job.*

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3. *Employees are more positive to the social forces of the peer group than to the incentives and control of management.*

4. *Employees are more responsive to management to the extent that a supervisor can meet a subordinate's need for belonging, acceptance, and for a sense of identity.*

Schein (1980: 62)

Finally, it is necessary to clarify the non-rationality argument which is at the centre of Mayo's ideas and which related to his view of human nature. He acknowledged that mechanization produced monotonous work that induced in many workers what he called "a low grade reverie" through which problems which were molehills came to be perceived as mountains as a result of obsessive thinking. Mayo's argument was that the work situation contained no elements to dismay the worker once its true reality was understood. Since there was no disparity between reality and the reverie of the "normal person", it followed that those who were dissatisfied with their situations must be victims of their own obsession. That is, a prior evidence that the complainant was abnormal. This version of Catch 22 is what, in the view of some writers, made Mayo a "management saint". The view of workers as non-rational creatures of sentiment which he preached, appealed to those managers who were already practising corporate fascism (Rose 1978). It reinforced their prejudices.

Watson (1986) argued that human relations severely underestimated the degree of rationality on the part of the workers, while overestimating the rationality of those who managed them. Such an assessment is irrelevant to the basic proposition being made here. By stressing the rationality of management and the irrationality of workers, human relations' view of human nature gave it a distinct appeal to managers.

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11.   Quick fix potential

Because the problem of performance was held to be located within the employees, there was no need, in the view of human relations writers, to engage in the time-consuming task of changing the form of management control.   The human relations approach suggested easily implementable solutions which claimed to offer fast results to managers who were uninterested in human issues.   Anthony (1986: 98) argued that all the people-centered activities could be seen as aspects of management which were considered by many line managers as irritating, tiresome or embarrassing. Personnel departments in his view, were monuments to the refusal of managers to recognise their responsibility for labour. Human relations techniques which were spawned by Mayo's writings   offered managers a way to opt out of their responsibilities.

12.   Contribution or ownership potential

Human relations rested on the belief that little needed to be done in order for the plum of commitment to fall into management's hands. Management needed only to have developed the necessary skills for growing plums trees, that is, it needed to create the right conditions in which commitment could be demonstrated by the workers.   The   principles of human relations encouraged management to ignore (and withdraw) from any concern with a conscious policy of employee relationships.

Management was thus given direction by human relations and was told that it should attempt to integrate workers into the organization.   However, it received little guidance on how to do this.   Managers were told that individuals should be socially integrated into the primary worker group which in turn would be managed so as to operate in a way which was consistent with management's desires.   Colleague groups would be established and fostered by management and recruits introduced into these. Individuals would be guided away from group loyalties which did not fit in with management's aims, and informal leaders would be used as communication channels. The scope provided by the implementation of the techniques gave the opportunity

for management's to personalise and customise their implementation of the human relations approach and thus achieve a feeling of ownership for its implementation.

13. Leadership focus

Bartell (1976) argued that Mayo tied his findings to the conservative sentiments of business leaders by advocating the non-intervention of governments. His ideas therefore struck a chord with the leaders of industry. Mayo stressed the primary role of managers, believing that deliberate planning of co-operation, was not to be achieved by government institutions, but rather through the development of administrative elites within the private, and more particularly the industrial organizations of our society.

The popular version of what human relations said was that good leadership led to increased productivity. It improved morale which led to increased effort. The focus of the leadership training was the supervisor. A human relations textbook listed the characteristics of the foreman's job as leader,

As a leader in the workshop the foreman should,

(a)   weld the group together into a harmonious whole
(b)   maintain authority in a democratic way
(c)   encourage spontaneous discipline
(d)   accept all responsibility for the group
(e)   establish firm, fair, friendly treatment of all employees
(f)   raise morale and create enthusiasm
(g)   inspire security, certainty and confidence.

Thus for the early human relations writers, the key to higher performance was through enhanced leadership skills of managers, rather than through incentive schemes. To Mayo, the "human side of management", involved a process of personal persuasive leadership. It was claimed that this participative style of leadership could translate the "vision of a true industrial democracy into a dynamic living reality" as the writers of the time put it.

Mayo's notion of democratic leadership meant, not so much that the worker should be consulted, as that he should be advised of the change that management had decided upon in advance.

The material represented in this section illustrates the appeal that that human relations ideas had for managers and how they bolstered management legitimacy, control and ideology. Commenting critically, Rose (1978: 124) wrote that,

> *"Mayoism emerged rapidly as the twentieth century's most seductive management ideology. What, after all, could be more appealing than to be told that one's subordinates are non-logical, that their unco-operativeness is a frustrated urge to co-operate; that their demands for cash mask a need for approval; and that you have a historical destiny as a broker of social harmony".*

It is not surprising therefore, as Bendix said, that the human relations ideas appealed to managers since they matched their needs for achievement, success and career advancement. He indicated that it was the younger manager who was most attracted to this "new management". He saw it as a way of increasing his influence and effectiveness in the bureaucractic organization. Human relations thus became a tool for internal politics and career advancement for managers in organizations.

NEO HUMAN RELATIONS

The survey of popular management ideas which was reported at the beginning of this chapter placed the neo-human relations (NHR) management idea family in top position. The influence of these American writers on management thought began in the late 1950s and has continued ever since. Their ideas have passed into American and British management practice in the form of staff appraisal and counselling, supervisory training and job design. All the writers to be discussed in this section,

(a) Viewed "conventional" formal organization as a set of techniques embodying specific psychological assumptions.

(b) Asserted that the conventional, formal type of organization generated individual psychological distress and suggested that managers replaced these with more organismic structures.

(c) Offered technical organizational prescriptions to improve matters.

(d) Held that managers should trust their subordinates to be more responsible for the performance of their jobs.

(e) Suggested that managers should permit the subordinates to participate in making up the content of their own jobs.

The basic thesis of neo-human relations (NHR) was that above all, the worker wanted the opportunity to grow and develop on the job. The writers visualized that it would be this which would bring an end to industrial conflict. They assumed that if the employee was allowed to do responsible and meaningful work, his attitude to the company would become entirely positive, and he would come to share the goals of management.

During the 1950s and the 1960s the implicit authoritarianism of human relations had become socially unacceptable. This hastened the adoption of neo-human relations. In their view, competition between individuals and departments in the company continued to be an anathema. However, NHR writers did offer a vision of a firm in which, because of the of hierarchy and specialization, people were not only given room to grow but also became involved in a co-operative process.

Butler (1986) wrote that by the end of the 1950s, management had reacted against the crudeness of Taylor's formulations and had found that Mayo's informal group was not as malleable, emotive and non-rational as they had been given to believe. He speculated on what the next motivational fad should be and suggested that it would contain the following features:

1. It should allow a return to dealing with the individual rather than the group.

2. It should be an amalgam, retaining the best aspects of Taylorism and Mayoism while limiting their disadvantages.

3. The new theory should call upon the employee to return to self-reliance and the Protestant work ethic, but not so independent that the firm lost control.

4.   The employee should only be able to develop his
        new found self-reliance through work in the
        organization.

Butler commented that while it would have been absurd to expect any theory (or more accurately, any social philosophy) to satisfy such unrealistically demanding specifications, NHR did meet nearly all of these criteria. A new initiative was required and was supplied by those who made up the NHR family of ideas.

While building upon Mayo's views and the Hawthorne studies, NHR emphasised the contribution of Abraham Maslow (in the view of some critics, too selectively and too zealously). All the neo-human relationists recognised peoples' needs for acceptance, status and recognition. However, they went further and argued that employees wanted to develop and apply their full range of abilities and obtained satisfaction through achieving demanding but worthwhile objectives.

NHR ideas were put into practice through the techniques of organizational development (OD). A major aspect of OD, indeed a defining characteristic of it according to Beckhard (1969), was the involvement of senior managers in the change programmes. The OD literature advised OD change agents to always, "start at the top". Blake and Mouton (1969), for example, asserted that to change a company it was necessary for those who headed it to lead the change of it. Argyris (1970) in his description of his consultancy approach wrote that he always began with a discussion with the chief executives of the company.

The way in which OD was introduced into companies (top-down by OD consultants selected and paid for by management) ensured that the process was constantly under management control. This acted to reassure management and added to the appeal of the NHR ideas which underpinned the OD interventions. The consultant entered into a relationship with management with an implied agreement about areas of activity and areas of reservation. Kahn (1974) noted that senior management assumed that, in most cases, the OD process would neither alter, nor infringe their traditional

prerogatives in matters of staff selection, resource allocation and decision-making freedom. The contract implied an agreement to induce satisfaction, motivation and productivity. However, consultants were precluded from becoming involved in issues relating to the availability of equipment, choice of supervisor or the allocation of rewards.

The tendency has been for OD consultants to leave the role structure (and hence the power structure) of the organization intact. Instead, their focus was upon those activities and stylistic characteristics that were left to the discretion of the individual. This gave OD interventions a heavily individualist focus which is only partly abated by its concern with teams.

Few organizational development (OD) efforts actually bring about the type of structural changes that goal congruence and bureaucratic demise theories would hypothesise. Under appropriate conditions, the Argyris approach could influence people directly, change organizational climates and processes and yield performance effects. However, it achieved this while leaving organizational structures surprising unaffected. Perhaps this was the very feature that appealed to managers. NHR offered specific techniques such as laboratory (or T-group) training. This was used in the belief that if managers became more authentic, increased their interpersonal competence, and changed their values and ultimately their behaviour, then their organizations would develop more appropriate structures than the traditional pyramidal ones.

Organizational development as originally conceived, involved data collection, organizational decision making and the development of a commitment to that decision. Thus interpersonal change was viewed as a prelude to organizational change. The theories of leadership presented, tended to be offered in value-laden terms. Legge argued that the values, processes and techniques that clustered under the umbrella-like label of OD which the neo-human relations movement gave birth to, were a response to the problem of organizational adaption to rapid rates of technological and social change. The OD values were particularly important and Margulies and Raia (1973) summarised the six main ones,

1.	Providing opportunities for people to function as human beings rather than as resources in the productive process.

2.	Providing opportunities for each organizational member, as well as for the organization itself, to develop its full potential.

3.	Seeking to increase the effectiveness of the organization in terms of all its goals.

4.	Attempting to create an environment in which it is possible to find exacting and challenging work.

5.	Providing opportunities for people in organizations to influence the way in which they relate to work, the organization and to the environment.

6.	Treat each individual human being as a person with a complex set of needs, all of which are important in his work and life.

The organizational implication of OD's value position suggested that the values involved a movement,

*	away from a view of man as essentially bad and towards a view of him as essentially good

*	away from avoidance or negative evaluation of individuals towards confirming them as human beings

*	away from a view of individuals as fixed towards seeing them as in process

* way from maskmanship and game playing and towards authentic behaviour

* away from use of status for maintaining power and prestige towards use of status for organizationally relevant purposes

* away from distrusting people towards trusting them

* away from avoiding facing others with relevant data towards making appropriate confrontation

* away from avoidance of risk taking towards a willingness to take risks

* away from a view of process work as being unproductive effort towards seeing it as essential to effective task accomplishment

* away from primary emphasis on competition towards a greater emphasis on collaboration

The first reaction to this list is that these values appear to directly contradict the argument being presented in this thesis. Indeed virtually all the thirteen variables which are claimed to enhance the popularity of an management idea are challenged by them. However, it is important to distinguish between public support and private action. What managers claimed publicly to support and what they actually did in their organizations, will reveal the gap between espousing certain management ideas for public effect and actually translating them into fundamental structural changes and implementing these within organizations. Fincham and Rhodes (1988: 169) made this point,

"... the efforts to humanize work are seen to serve an <u>ideological</u> purpose, rather than necessarily being part of management practice. They represent a body of ideas that may be called upon if management is being held upon to public criticism, and that is favoured by certain sections of management (like personnel and public relations) concerned with the firm's outward image, yet with little real impact on work process".

The ideas of some of neo-human relations writers who received a high rating on the survey described at the start of this chapter will now be briefly examined.

Abraham Maslow, "Needs Hierarchy of Motivation Theory", 1943

Maslow (1943) presented his theory of human motivation based on a hierarchy of seven sets of needs. The theory itself was never conceived with management or organizations in mind. In his original writings, he addressed social issues in terms of the effect of societal factors upon the mental health of individuals. He himself wrote that his book expounding his ideas was, *"... in the realm of science or pre-science, rather than exhortation, or of a personal philosophy, or literary expression "* (Maslow, 1962: v-vi).

He hypothesised that, on average, the physiological needs of human beings were generally 85% satisfied, the safety needs 70% satisfied, the social needs 50% satisfied, ego needs 40% satisfied, and the self-actualization needs 10% satisfied. Only unsatisfied needs in the individual acted as motivators. He proposed that while the needs could be considered in a loose, step-wise progression, it was possible for higher level needs to emerge at some point <u>prior</u> to the total satisfaction of the lower level needs.

Maslow is one of several theorists whose original ideas have been misrepresented to such a degree that what people **think** he said is actually more important for the purposes of this thesis than what he **actually** said. The popular interpretations have transformed Maslow's "suggestion" into an

"estimate"; changed his societal average into an individual needs score; implied that his theory was based on empirical research; and reduced the number of his need categories from seven to five.

What managers and management students are taught is that Maslow differentiated between higher and lower level needs; placed them in a hierarchy of ascending order of importance to the individual; stated that a satisfied need no longer monopolized an individual's behaviour which became focused upon satisfying the next level up; and that only unsatisfied needs acted as motivators (except the self-actualization need). Such popular interpretations led managers to believe a number of things. First, that for motivation purposes, they should focus only on higher level needs and could ignore the first two levels of needs which included employee demands for job security and wages. Second, that this needs hierarchy applied to all people in all cultures and in all situations. Third that all people looked for the satisfaction of their higher level needs at work, rather than outside of it.

After reviewing a range of motivation studies, Wahba and Bridwell (1975) concluded that Maslow's theory received "... little clear or consistent support from the available research findings" (p.9). Miner's (1980) judgement was that the available research did not support Maslow's theory to any significant degree. However, this did not imply that the theory was wrong but merely that it was not supported. What then accounts for the popularity of this theory? Blackler and Shimmin (1984: 79) wrote that although Maslow's theory was difficult, if not impossible, to test empirically,

> ".. it has an inherent appeal and face validity in explaining why different needs and motives may be expected to operate in different situations ... For this reason and because it has often been presented as a prescription for "good" management practice (i.e. design your organization and managerial strategies to encourage self-actualization and the people will voluntarily integrate their own goals with those of the organization), it permeates much of the advice offered to managers and others concerning motivation at work. Indeed, "self-actualization" is becoming a term in common parlance".

Brown (1980: 157) commented upon the attraction of the human potential movement to management consultants, management educators and to managers. She felt that its assumptions and beliefs fitted in well with the post-1945 social climate in which control of the employee, based on greed and fear, became unfashionable. Maslow's ideas came to be adopted by social scientists and researchers who came to form the NHR school of management thought (e.g. McGregor, 1960: Likert, 1967; Argyris, 1962).

All of these writers saw a clash between an individual's psychological aspirations and needs on the one hand, and the contemporary organizational structures and management styles on the other. To reconcile these differences and secure worker commitment, they advocated remedies such group decision making and participatory management styles.

Maslow's needs hierarchy theory has been widely taught to managers, and has been used by them to guide their decisions about employees (Matheson 1974) and about how organizations should be managed (Clark 1960-61: 202). As a theory, it is attractive to managers. The generalization which can be universally applied is that "employees may be expected to always want more". Except for the case of the need for self-actualization, the theory as understood by managers neither stresses individual differences nor requires the measurement of individual motivational patterns before action is taken. Instead, it considers groups of individuals as being defined partly by external circumstances. In this form, the theory is well suited to the needs of broad managerial policies on human relations matters. This is because these operate in "on-the-average" terms.

The theory implies that, to the extent that management could control conditions in the work group's environment, it could induce certain motivational patterns and obtain the benefits of increased production output and reduced turnover and absenteeism. The theory also includes "when - then" propositions. For example, when job conditions are poor in terms of pay and security, then employees will focus attention on the work itself, so then, if management wishes to obtain significant motivational consequences, it has to change these work conditions. Similarly when job conditions improve, then the behaviour of the supervisors become important, so then management needs to train them. When the job conditions improve still

further, <u>then</u> the role of the supervisor becomes less important and the work itself re-establishes its importance as a motivator.   Finally, <u>when</u> people move up the needs hierarchy, <u>then</u> they will become motivated only by the higher level needs.

Many managers have used the theory to understand changing employee motivations. It applying it, they have tended to telescope the needs hierarchy into a dichotomy with physical and safety needs on one side and higher level needs on the other. In this formulation, the watershed mark is quite low on the hierarchy whereas in Maslow's original formulation it was placed much higher. The theory has not contributed to the development of scientifically-based managerial practice.   It has instead been added to the stock of working ideas used by managers to understand, predict and influence employee motivation and performance.   In Etzioni-Halevy's (1985) terms, it provided a general orientation towards human or social reality.

Douglas McGregor, "Theory X and Theory Y, 1960

McGregor shares with Maslow the distinction of having an incorrect interpretation of his theory gain a wider circulation than his original idea. McGregor (1960: 33-4) presented a set of assumptions about human motivation and behaviour which he said were implicit in management literature, theory and practice. He labelled these Theory X assumptions. These were that the average human being had an inherent dislike of work and would avoid it if he could. That because of this, people had to be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened with punishment in order to get them to put in the necessary effort to achieve organizational goals. Finally, the average individual wished to avoid responsibility, had little ambition, wanted security above all else and preferred to be directed. The consequences of holding such assumptions, according to McGregor, led managers to rely on "... *rewards, promises, incentives, or threats and other coercive devices"* (1960: 42). The first three words of the preceding quotation are most important. They are the ones most often omitted in accounts of what McGregor wrote. McGregor then went on to outline the assumptions related to Theory Y.

In an earlier article, he described the range of management styles which were <u>all</u> based on Theory X assumptions (McGregor 1957: 114). These behavioural patterns ranged from coercion, threat, close supervision and control at one extreme, to "soft" methods involving being persuasive and achieving harmony at the other. However, popular accounts of McGregor focus only on one aspect of behaviour that Theory X managers employed ("hard" techniques) and ignore the others. Terry and Rue (1982: 51), for example, told supervisors that, *"... a leader subscribing to Theory X would more than likely use a much more autocractic style of supervision than a leader who believes in Theory Y assumptions".* Finally one can note that most books incorrectly report McGregor as saying either that Theory X and Theory Y are the only two sets of assumptions that managers make about people or that they are at the extreme ends of a continuum.

McGregor's work has most often been discussed in terms of management style. Workers' hostility to management and its directions was the result not of personality characteristics of the employees, but as a reaction to their lack of job satisfaction. Following Maslow, the McGregor argument held that worker needs were related to the intrinsic rather than extrinsic aspects of work, and thus could not be directly met by management. The manager's job from this perspective was to create the conditions which would allow workers to meet these needs themselves by the way they were managed (McGregor 1967).

Taking these ideas as their points of departure, consultants and business academics re-interpreted and sought to convince managers of the one-best-way of Theory Y management. Management control was retained in his formulation since managers continued to be responsible for organizing the elements of the production process. The two were held to be complementary. Discussing the relationship between Maslow and McGregor, Butler (1986: 225) stated that,

> *"Without McGregor the management world would never have heard of Maslow. But Maslow gave McGregor intellectual credibility, and in management circles, McGregor gave Maslow fame".*

Frederick Herzberg, "Motivation Hygiene Theory", 1959

Brown (1980: 159) described Herzberg's impact on management thinking as "spectacular". There were two major aspects of Herzberg's contribution. First there was the theory itself, and second there was the technique that it spawned - job enrichment. Writers have made the distinction between what Herzberg originally wrote and what academics and managers believe that he said. What he actually said was that two sets of variables (called hygiene factors and motivators) together influenced worker motivation. What he did not say was that hygiene factors were less important than motivators. The cost conscious manager was attracted to the proposition that investments in salary, fringe benefits and working conditions could only yield limited results.

The message that has been passed down in seminars and short management texts is that the only way to motivate people is to offer them psychological growth. This is an incorrect concept which is hugely appealing to many managers. His attractive job enrichment technique can be applied within an existing organizational framework. The approach, which was initially developed from Herzberg's work, came to be promoted by many representatives of the neo-human relations school. It even became institutionalised in the "Quality of Working Life" programmes in many countries. Lupton (1976:123) described Herzberg's ideas in the following way,

> "If you wish (as employer or manager) to have an efficient organization, you must set to work to improve the performance of the individuals who presently work for it. It does not matter who the individuals are, what they can do, what they are doing, what the organization does, how it does it, or what it is, there will always be scope for re-dividing and re-designing its tasks so as to enrich them, and for so arranging the context of administrative procedure, supervision and interpersonal relationships, that they will not inhibit motivation and satisfaction."

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In the re-interpreted version of Herzberg's theory one can discover virtually all the thirteen elements discussed in this chapter. The Lupton quotation clearly signals the universality of the application. It was held to be relevant to all organizations. The theory stressed only two types of motivation variables and thus was easily communicable to managers. It specified a set of precise steps through which the technique of job enrichment could be applied. Blackler and Shimmin mentioned the fascination which the theory possessed for managers who did not seek rich conceptual insights into analytical theory but who wanted guiding principles for action,

"Herzberg's theory ... while poorly regarded by psychologists nowadays, is accepted readily enough by hard-pressed managers who want no more than a general rule of thumb to help guide their approach".

Blackler and Shimmin (1984: 133)

The exact form of job enrichment could be customised to each company thereby offering a contribution or ownership dimension. Herzberg, like Taylor, believed that the "tyranny of the group" suppressed the satisfaction of individual needs. The focus of his theory and the target of his technique was upon the individual in the workplace. In contrast to some of the "participative management" writers, Herzberg argued that the workers should **not** be involved in deciding the types of enrichment to which they were to be subjected. His explanation was that they were not always competent to contribute to the discussion and decision. The effect of this point was that the answer to the very critical question of who controlled the production process was management. Thus the requirement for management control was met. The technique of job enrichment was easy to understand, and suggested ways of improving employee motivation and performance which did not involve higher wages (a hygiene factor) and which left organizational structures and management roles and authority intact.

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The role of management was <u>legitimised</u> since it was management which had the knowledge and expertise to decide upon the form of enrichment. Moreover, from Herzberg's perspective, everyone in the organization was potentially a motivator-seeker or a hygiene-seeker. Hygiene-seekers were held to be mentally unhealthy individuals who had been blocked at the hygiene level by some unfortunate past experience. It was management's job to help them through this problem. The co-incidence with Mayo's views about the non-rationality (reverie) of workers is significant here.

It has been argued that the appeal of Herzberg's theory lay partly in the motivational concepts used. These focused on power-authority relationships from the standpoint of how management used these to create a productive work climate. The theory identified sound and unsound alignments of motivations towards productivity in the industrial situation. It was based upon the idea of <u>human nature</u> as being of the "animal - Adam" type. This view held that man was concerned with avoiding pain from the environment. Hence, companies had to deal constructively with hygiene and maintenance issues at work, paying particular attention to work layout, physical job demands, personal status and so on.

A further basic need of man said Herzberg stemmed from his "human-Abraham" nature which sought growth from tasks (Herzberg (1966: 76). Some writers, particularly those from the critical Marxist tradition, have seen job enrichment as a cosmetic attempt to increase the skill and discretion of workers without interfering with management authority in any significant way. Miner (1980) acknowledged that the theory lacked the research to confirm it but noted the tremendous appeal it possessed for managers since its publication.

It may be that the popularity of motivation-hygiene theory, and particularly the idea-technique of job enrichment, stemmed from the fact that it provided managers with the pay-off that they wanted. That pay-off may not have been, as it is often assumed, in the area of increased productivity or product quality, although this was always a possibility. Empirical research studies showed two things. First, that a great deal more was written and talked about job enrichment than was actually put into practice. Fincham and Rhodes (1988) reported that there was widespread acceptance of work

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humanization at the level of public policy. Several European governments (including Britain's) and international bodies supported initiatives in this area. However, the true impact on the shopfloor was far less significant (see Wall, 1982).

Many schemes never progressed beyond the experimental stage while others were discontinued after a short time. According to Fincham and Rhodes a number of experiments which claimed far-reaching job enrichment results only involved cosmetic changes. Child (1984: 43) put the number of European job enrichment schemes at 100 or so. Guest, Williams and Drew (1980) reported that job enrichment scheme managers judged half the schemes to have been "very beneficial". Only half of the workers interviewed at the plants concerned were aware that any change had taken place, and only a small proportion of these identified the changes as either positive or significant.

Second, there are examples of highly successful job enrichment programmes being abruptly terminated by management (Marglin 1979). This fragmentary evidence leads one to the conclusion that, in the climate of the time, job enrichment, could have provided a banner to which managers and organizations might flock and thereby espouse publicly an idea which had become fashionable in the way that companies see being "green" as fashionable in the early 1990s.

Management could say these things without actually having to implement them in practice. If they were forced to or wished to embark on job enrichment programmes, Herzberg had written the rules in such a way as to give management a continued control over the labour process. In some cases, it appeared that the programmes did go beyond the limits set by managers. Worker's enthusiasm resulted not only in increased productivity but also in demands for increased worker control. It was at this point that such programmes were terminated. Parallels can be drawn with the quality circle movement of the 1980s.

Rensis Likert, "System 4 Theory", 1967

Likert (1967) developed a psychologically-focused, universally-applicable theory. His message was that democracy paid in management. He advocated the integration of individuals into the organization through groups which in turn were integrated into the organization's official structure of decision-making by being made to overlap through the continuing presence of "linking-pin" members who belonged to more than one group.

Likert sought to establish a single cause linking a person's attitude and his performance. The theory strongly emphasised the connecting of work groups, their interactions, and the practical considerations of profit and loss. The measures he used for scoring the dimensions of human organization were motivation, communication, interaction, decision-making, goal-setting, control and performance. They were all held by him to relate (except for the last), either directly or indirectly, to people's states of mind.

Likert's theory focused upon leadership and expanded to encompass lateral and vertical inter-group relationships, organizational climate and social systems. He went on to prescribe what should be done for improvement saying that organizational performance would be raised if all organizations resembled his System 4 model (one of four models which he described). Likert clearly stated his normative leadership preferences for the universal application of his "one-best-System 4- way",

> *"System 4 harnesses human motivation in ways that yield positive co-operation rather than fearful antagonisms on the part of the people in the organization; by contrast, Systems 1 and 2 tend to develop less favourable attitudes, more hostile attitudes, or more submissive attitudes"*

> Likert in conversation with Dowling (1973: 34)

Likert did present a great deal of empirical supporting data when arguing for the replacement of Systems 1 and 2 with System 4. However, this is in itself insufficient to explain the popularity of his theory amongst managers. He did

claim a <u>universal</u> relevance for his prescription which added to its appeal. He believed that there were general principles applicable to all managerial situations even though the actual applications would vary with the particular company climate involved. His belief in universal and transferable properties was founded on his view of <u>human nature</u> which held that inherited essence was the same everywhere and that culture, while it may influence the application of management principles, was not itself a principle.

<u>Leadership</u> in his view, affected productivity through its effects on subordinates. The pattern might be complex, but the chain of causation was single and uni-directional. The task of leadership was to ensure that all the interactions and all the relationships were experienced by organizational members as supportive. That is, they were ones which built and maintained employees' sense of personal worth and importance (Likert 1961: 103). This basic principle ascribed an extremely influential role to the leader. Leadership was reflected in the managerial and supervisory practices which underpinned the System 4 scheme.

Likert's approach to organizational development involved strengthening the use of managerial power and authority in order to exercise <u>control</u>. His approach assisted the organization-as-client to assess the character of its human organization. He concluded that differences in managerial leadership produced four different types of organization - exploitative - authoritative, consultative, participative group and benevolent-autocratic.

The focus on leadership was only one aspect of the theory that gave it its appeal. The four different styles of management matched the four systems of organization (1, 2, 3 and 4) and related to the "linking pin model" of organization. The key aspects of Likert's theory were thus easily <u>communicable</u> to managers.

The work possesses a <u>commonsense</u> appeal through the use of a survey instrument which is used to help managers "picture" their own organization. This data was summarised, fed back to the managers, and evaluated against the theory so as to assist in the identification of the form of human organization currently existing. Furthermore, since the theory and the scales described what would be required to move to a participative group style

(claimed to be the most suitable for facilitating productivity and satisfaction), it was possible to plot the series of steps which would be essential for achieving such a change.

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton, "Managerial Grid", 1964

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton's model drew heavily upon Likert's (1961) work. Grid theory owes a strong intellectual debt to the early Ohio State University studies on leadership which examined the dimensions of "consideration" and "initiating structure". This work was developed at the Survey Research Centre at the University of Michigan where Likert was a faculty member.   It was the Michigan researchers who first conceptualised two leadership dimensions which they labelled "employee orientation" and "production orientation".   These were held to be independent and a leader could be high or low on both (Katz, Maccoby and Morse, 1950).

Bryman (1986) analysed these two research studies and concluded that there was a clear resemblance between the two Grid dimensions and the Ohio studies' pre-occupation with consideration and initiating structure. He stated that *"... there is often an implicit view among many writers that the former arose out of the latter"* (p. 71). The marketing expertise of Blake and Mouton rather than the originality of their thought is what they are perhaps most noted for. Some observers have felt that Blake and Mouton's outstanding contribution to the investigation of leadership has been in "concept packaging". They have provided a method for explaining and developing training programmes which focus sensitivity training and organizational development on the leadership concept.   Their grid made the slippery concept of leadership much easier to handle for many managers.

To emphasise the similarities between Likert's work and Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid, it is instructive to identify aspects of Likert's 1961 book which contain ideas related to leadership, behaviour and performance. For example, Likert considered whether a supervisor should be employee-centred or job-centred. His review of the literature led him to conclude that neither extreme was appropriate but that,

"If a high level of performance is to be achieved, it appears necessary for the supervisor to be employee-centred and at the same time to have high performance goals, and a contiguous enthusiasm as to the importance of achieving these goals."

Likert (1961:8)

There is evidence to suggest that Blake and Mouton's starting point for the production of their Managerial Grid was either Likert's conclusion in his 1961 book or the research by Katz, Maccoby and Morse (1950) cited earlier. Although the Managerial Grid is likely to be familiar to readers, it is possible to describe it in such a way as to highlight some of the thirteen variables being considered in this chapter. What accounts for its popularity amongst managers?

The Grid is presented to managers as a straightforward procedure for organizational improvement based on apparently self-evident, commonsense propositions. The Grid is a classification of styles of management based upon two variables - "concern for people" and "concern for production". There are nine degrees of concern for each of the two dimensions, and this gives a matrix consisting of 81 cells, each representing a possible management style. Of these, only five positions were focused upon and named - those in the middle and those at each of the four corners of the matrix. These are shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. The Managerial Grid

High 9 **1,9 Country Club Management** Thoughtful attention to needs of people for satisfying relationships leads to a comfortable, friendly organization atmosphere and work tempo.

9,9 Team Management Work accomplishment is from committed people; interdependence through a "common stake" in organization purpose leads to relationships of trust and respect.

8

7

6

5,5 Organization Man Management Adequate organization performance is possible through balancing the necessity to get out work with maintaining morale of people at a satisfactory level.

5

4

3

2 **1,1 Impoverished Management** Exertion of minimum effort to get required work done is appropriate to sustain organization membership.

9,1 Authority-Obedience Efficiency in operations results from arranging conditions of work in such a way that human elements interfere to a minimum degree.

Low 1

Concern for People

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Low   High

Concern for Production

The use of two dimensions and the discussion of only five styles of management added considerably to the <u>communicability</u> of the theory to its intended management audience. So too did the uni-causal explanation which claimed that management style ---> attitudes ---> behaviour ---> organizational performance.

The focus was of the Grid was upon <u>leadership</u> or the style of management. By this, Blake and Mouton meant a manager's belief about his society, his subordinates, his colleagues, his job, and the way in which he expressed these in his behaviour at work. Each of the five styles was labelled. The 1/1 manager (see Figure 2.1) would be a person who showed concern neither for the well-being of his subordinates, nor for the efficient use of the non-human resources given to his charge. A 1/9 manager would be a tough, non-nonsense individual, who expected people to get the production out on schedule and would use any stick or carrot to push or pull them in that direction. The 9/1 manager was the softie who let production slide in case he offended anyone. The 9/9 man was one who commanded the confidence of his subordinates, was solicitous as to their welfare and personal development, but who, at the same time, could deploy both human and non-human resources in ways that led to high operating efficiency. The 5/5 manager was on the right lines but had a long way to go. He was the honest trier.

The <u>step-by step</u> approach was a major feature of Grid approach. The programme consisted of seven phases. These started with the individual and worked through the group up to the level of the organization. Thus the Grid method had an individual, a team, and a company focus. Further "stepping" or staging was provided within each of the phases by the use of self-administered questionnaires. Such tight structuring has been a major feature of the Grid Development packaged approach. These instruments were used as part of the training room materials in an educational programme which sought to create and develop *"more productive problem-solving relationships"* (Blake, Mouton, Barnes and Greiner, 1964).

The Grid programme has been widely used throughout the world over the last thirty years. Part of its appeal can be attributed to the fact that it offers a <u>single solution perspective</u> or preferred single management style (labelled

9/9), which is claimed to be <u>universally applicable</u>. Moreover, that style is held to be positively associated with career success, productivity and profitability, as compared to any other style (Blake and Mouton, 1978: 128). At the same time however, the Grid approach has received criticism from many writers. Quinn and McGrath (1982) suggested that there was little empirical evidence to demonstrate the validity of Blake and Mouton's claims; and the Grid's values and prescriptions have been challenged (Strauss, 1973; Bernardin and Alvares, 1976). However it is not within the remit of this thesis to deal with these criticisms. One can note Anthony's (1977) assessment that the pronouncements of Blake and Mouton :

> *"... probably represent one of the strongest influences on current management thinking, it is solemnly (and uncritically) taught in many management centres and universities and it has influenced the policies and structure of companies such as BP and ICI."*

Chris Argyris, "Goal Congruence Theory", 1964

Goal congruence theory was developed by Chris Argyris. It has been outlined in three of his publications (Argyris, 1957; Argyris, 1964; Argyris, 1973). The basic idea that Argyris put forward was the necessity for organizations to create circumstances in which adults could develop healthy personalities. Organizational design should ensure that the personal growth needs of individual development and organizational needs for productivity were matched. This view gave the name to this theory. Argyris therefore contributed to the self-actualization theme which was at the heart of the neo-human relations movement.

He argued that individuals developed or progressed to different degrees along six dimensions. Forces within society (including organizations) and within people could inhibit this process of development. A second building block in Argyris's theory was the concept of organization as epitomized in administrative management theory. Here he was concerned with principles such as task specialization, chain of command, unity of direction, and span of

control. In his view, such a formal organization was incompatible with the development of a healthy, mature state in the individual. The effect of this contradiction was, over time, to make healthy employees passive, dependent and submissive.

Argyris argued that most workers existed in companies that oppressed them to some degree. Close supervision, minute instruction and job specialization were considered as burdensome. Workers were likely to react by developing some defence mechanism such as apathy, aggression, vacillation or ambivalence. All of these reactions imposed some strain upon the individual and through him, upon the organization. Argyris's very tentative answer seems to be job enlargement and reduced supervision. Work design and supervision by management were the control tools of administrative management. They impeded adaption to change, had a deadening effect on individual motivation and broke the link between individual input and organizational performance. Argyris argued that they also prevented an individual achieving self-actualization.

Argyris did not have a one-way view of causation, from management style to performance. He acknowledged the need to amend the structures to support a modified management style. His prescriptions were underpinned by a view of man who looked for challenges, worked in adaptive groups and sought common goals. He claimed a universal application for his theory. However, the theory had difficulty in explaining violent conflict, opposing constituencies and power fights.

Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, Situational Leadership Theory, 1969

Originally called the Life Cycle Theory of Leadership, the re-named Situational Leadership Theory used a contingency approach which stated that the effective leadership style was the one that fitted the particular situation. As with the Ohio studies mentioned earlier, managerial behaviour was classified into two categories. The first was task behaviour which was concerned with a manager engaging in one-way communication with a subordinate to explain what has to be done. The second was relationship

behaviour, which involved the manager in engaging in two way communication with a junior so as to provide him with socio-emotional support, psychological stroking and facilitating behaviour.

The key feature of Hersey and Blanchard's leadership theory which distinguished it from its precessors, was its emphasis on **subordinate maturity**. This was defined as a person's willingess to direct their own behaviour. Such maturity, it was argued, should be considered only in relation to each specific task. In Hersey and Blanchard's formulation, an employee was not considered to be mature or immature in a general way, but instead, people were held to possess different degrees of maturity in relation to specific tasks.

From this brief description of Situational Leadership Theory one can see that, although the words may be different, the echos of the Ohio studies, the Tannenbaum and Schmidt's (1973) leadership style progression model and the Blake and Mouton Grid Development model are all strong. Explaining its major commitment to Situational Leadership, the Xerox Corporation cited *"the model's intuitive appeal and quick acceptance by our managers"* (Gumpert and Hambleton, 1979).

It may be that intuitive appeal did play a major part in this particular theory's popularity amongst personnel and training managers. Bryman (1986) noted that this leadership theory had not generated a great deal of research. He concluded that, *"... that there is. virtually no evidence to substantiate its fundamental tenets."* (p.147). Did such a lack of evidence matter to the manager? Bryman (1986: 149) thought not,

> *"... its [Situational Leadership Theory] concentration on just one situational variable, and the absence of a research tradition deriving from it, render it of little utility for leadership researchers. Ironically, it may be the very simplicity of the model and the absence of negative evidence that has made it so popular within management circles."*

The different strands of the neo-human relations management idea family will now be pulled together. They will be considered under the thirteen headings being used to organize the material in this chapter.

1.   Management control

The NHR writers offered to teach managers a form of control that was not imposed from outside of employees but which operated from within them. Superficially, much of the activity of OD (information sharing, authority and decision delegation) appears to suggest a reduction of management control. However, in nearly all cases, the limits about what decisions could be made were tightly set and required management go-ahead. Critics have argued that these OD techniques (now re-labelled employee commitment programmes), far from lessening management control, may have actually increased it (Dickson, 1981). Because a great effort was placed upon the communication of management objectives, employees may have come to better understand and more readily accept these objectives. In consequence, control through the management hierarchy came to be supported by peer group pressure. Watson explained the status-quo aspects of neo-human relations. He cited Maslow as an example,

> "The significance of Maslow's work does not lie in its scientific validity. It clearly has little. Its role has been as a propanganda device; propanganda in a good and humanistic cause, but propanganda nonetheless. It has been part of a cause to alter the way managers think about their employees; a cause, in effect, to make the world a better and more fulfilling place, albeit within the the existing political, social and economic system". Why did they buy it? Because it offered them a way to do it".

(Watson 1986:110)

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Lupton (1976) reminded readers that NHR did not reject the explicit notion of control. The principle of hierarchy was not rejected. Likert (1967) always represented his ideas on a hierarchical organizational chart. Argyris (1970) envisaged a weakening, but not an elimination of hierarchy, by a strengthening of "matrix" groups. He did not conceive of a flat hierarchy.

2.   Management legitimation

Lee (1971) noted that all NHR theory was addressed solely at managers whom it considered to be independent actors. There was nothing, for example, in McGregor's theory about employees trusting their managers or trade unions trusting their corporate managements to be fair and honest. Interpreters of ideas such as McGregor's Theory X - Theory Y, were in line with management ideology which saw managers as responsible for getting workers to co-operate with management and to identify with organizational goals. Management remained responsible for organizing the elements of the productive process.

From the NHR view, the manager's role was not that of a controller. Instead he was the developer and facilitator of the performance of the technical and social systems for which he was responsible. The manager was presumed to be working with his superiors and colleagues in the continuing process of goal-setting for the organization, and with his juniors in defining objectives and procedures. He carried the obligation to deal with any new and recurring barriers to performance. While self-control and self-direction amongst employees was assumed, this did not remove the maintenance aspects of the controller's role. It legitimated the manager's responsibilities to remove restrictions and to create and develop new investment opportunities in order that the employee's full potential could be utilised.

Nord (1974) stated that proponants of NHR accepted the existing distribution of power within organizations as legitimate. He cited McGregor's Theory Y assumptions and Management-by-Objectives as examples of ideas that were all usually introduced as ones which would not alter management's authority in any way. Blackler and Brown (1980: 163) said that the ideas of Herzberg and Maslow tempted managers to believe

that the conditions of optimum worker productivity were exactly those from which they could obtain psychological gratification. Herzberg's theory was held to state this explicitly and a similar conclusion was drawn from both Maslow's model and Argyris's work. The ideological implication was an apparant rationale for the acceptablity of the "status quo" and for management's part in it.

3.   **Guarantee of pay-off**

Discussing the outcomes of NHR applications, especially OD interventions, Kahn (1974) concluded that, *"significant increases in performance, attendance and satisfaction have been accomplished by organizational changes"*. He gave examples of OD interventions which included the division of labour, the definition of individual jobs, job redesign, job enlargement, job enrichment and so on. He emphasised that management's primary concern in most cases was with productivity and profitability, and only secondly with job satisfaction and the meaningfulness of work. However OD packages promised an explicit linkage between satisfaction and productivity. Likert himself felt that *"democracy pays in management"*.

Nord (1974) argued that the NHR writers said virtually nothing about the basic economic and political structures of organizations. While expounding employee-oriented principles, the school was impotent as a force for humanistically oriented change. Ironically, Nord felt that it was this very impotence of the school to change contemporary management practices that gave it such an appeal in the eyes of managers. Thus the pay-off for managers may not have been in terms of productivity gains, but more in terms of social prestige as they were able to talk about their concern for people with reference to job enrichment programmes which on the shopfloor had a limited application and produced minimal results.

4.   Steps or principles

NHR sought to make the exercise of authority by managers less autocratic and more acceptable to employees but nonetheless real. They did this by fostering the conditions under which the individual and the workgroup could identify with the objectives of the organization.   To this end, NHR ideas offered specific prescriptions and guides (See Table 2.4).   These may not have been what their authors had intended to say.

Table 2.4:   Summary of some neo-human relations idea principles

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Maslow (1954)	Hierarchy of needs going from physiological at the bottom to self-actualization at the top. Needs that have been satisfied no longer motivate.
Herzberg (1959)	There are two types of needs - hygiene and motivators. Only the latter lead people to action.
McGregor (1960)	Use Theory Y principles as the basis for your organization and management style.
Likert (1961)	Use System 4 participative group management style to maximise performance. Integrate group decision-making into structure through the use of linking-pin individuals.
Blake and Mouton (1964)	Most effective style is the 9/9 Team Management approach which is both highly task and person focused.

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5.   Communicability

The high level of communicatability of the different management ideas within the neo-human relations family has already been referred to. This communicatability might account for a large element of the popularity of NHR ideas amongst managers and business school academics. Only a few final examples are needed to make this point. In discussing Maslow's idea as it applied to organizations, Watson (1986: 107) wrote that,

> *"It undoubtedly has some basic credibility with those who read it - or read brief accounts of it in textbooks - as the hierarchy turned into a simple triangular diagram must have been drawn up on the blackboards of tens of thousands of management lectures and seminars over the years, not to mention possibly hundreds of thousands of essays and examination scripts submitted by students of business and management".*

McGregor's ideas have been presented as a stereotyped scheme of how managers tend to think about employee motivation, offered in a simplistic formulation. The issue is often presented as making a simple choice between a Theory X and a Theory Y style of management. The universality of the scheme is related to its application irrespective of the specific work being done by the particular group of employees involved. This greatly assisted in its communication. In discussing Herzberg, Hackman and Oldham (1980: 58) stated that :

> *"In sum, what the Herzberg theory does, and does well, is point attention directly to the considerable significance of the <u>work itself</u> as a factor in the ultimate motivation and satisfaction of employees. And because the message of the theory is simple, persuasive and directly relevant to the design and evaluation of actual organizational changes, the theory continues to be widely known and generally used by managers."*

6. Unitary perspective

NHR ideas were based upon the belief that the needs of the individual and of the organization were one and the same. The most satisfying organization in which to work would also be the most efficient. NHR taught the importance of relating work and organizational structure to the needs of employees. In this way employees would become happy, the organization would obtain their full co-operation and effort and efficiency would be increased. Employees should be given the feeling that the company goal was worth the effort, they should be made to feel part of the company, and should take pride in their contribution to the goal. This meant that the company's objectives had to inspire confidence in the intentions of management, and convey the belief that each employee would get rewards and satisfactions from working towards those objectives. In short, NHR writers pointed to a perfect balance between organizational goals and employee needs.

NHR suggested that since super-ordinate or meta-goals existed, most conflict was not of the zero-sum variety. It could therefore be resolved by consensus. This was because the differences were held to be about the most appropriate way to achieve the agreed goals. They assumed that there need be no conflict between management and workers provided that management conferred adequately with the workers. Their approach contained four implicit assumptions. First, that management's position was that which any "reasonable" person would adopt provided that it had been properly explained to him. Second, that all men of goodwill thought alike. Third, that virtually all basic conflict was avoidable. Fourth, that since there would be conflict about means, this should be managed creatively to produce the best solutions.

Rose (1978) suggested that NHR implied that a failure of workers to achieve higher level needs bred in them an obsession with cash rewards. As a doctrine, this was attractive to managers (despite its fragile scientific foundation), because it suggested that workers could be satisfied with rewards other than money. Daniel (1973) said that for the manager or management ideologist, the satisfaction of the ego need provided a powerful means of integrating the individual into the enterprise.

The unitary perspective was also present in McGregor's writings. Employees were seen as neither passive nor resistent but as anxious to assume responsibility, co-operate with management and identify with organizational (that is, managerial) goals. The task of management in this idea was to create the organizational conditions and methods of operation, which would allow individuals to achieve their goals by directing their efforts towards the achievement of organizational objectives.

Herzberg listed hygiene and motivational factors. Managers interpreted Herzberg's theory to mean that the demand for greater intrinsic rewards would be accompanied by a decline in demand for increased extrinsic rewards. Side-stepping the many methodological defects of the research upon these conclusions were based, a theory was offered which was concerned with efficiency and profitability, and which showed a fortuitous concurrence between individual and organizational needs. This allowed managers to accept the programmes of these researcher-consultants with confidence. Likert could also be added to this list since he too took a unitary view of organizational life which assumed that conflict was largely a matter of reconciling conflicting views. Overall therefore, Daniel (1973: 60-1) felt that NHR ideas assumed,

> *"(1)   a relatively low initial perception of conflict of interest between employer and employees, with a paternalistic management attaching high importance to responsibilities towards employees;*

> *(2)   a non-unionized labour force content to leave management to manage as it sees fit, not seeking to restrict management's discretion or resist change in any organized or collective manner, as opposed to such individual action as is indicated by turnover, absenteeism, sickness rates or individual output;*

(3)   a semi-rural environment with none of the history of mass unemployment, prolonged bitter battles with employers for union recognition and minimum rights, which tend to characterize industrial areas".

Daniel (1973: 60-1)

The NHR writers therefore helped managers to cope with the problem of conflict which they had viewed as damaging. They likened organizations to coalitions of interests in which conflict was held to be legitimate and unavoidable. The "point-of-production" resistance of workers was interpreted by the NHR advocates be a problem of poor communication. That is, managers and workers were unable to understand each other's point of view. The Industrial Society has taken a neo-human relations approach in stressing the importance and value of good communications in the workplace.

7.   Universal application

To varying degrees, all the NHR writers were perceived to be offering a "one-best-way" prescription. Daniel (1973) wrote that,

"They are universalistic in the sense that they suggest that there are certain needs shared by workers of all types and levels and their response to the work situation can be explained in terms of the extent to which these are satisfied".

The effect of this was that NHR explanations of the meaning of work (and the prescriptions about the appropriate action to be taken) were derived not from any analysis of socio-cultural variables which were amenable to study, but from a conception of human nature which was difficult if not impossible to test.

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8.   Authorization

Another core belief of NHR was that employees would be most motivated when they achieved "psychological growth". This possessed a considerable commonsense and intuitive appeal to managers. They only had to watch babies delight in their new achievements to confirm this gut feeling. This goes some way to explaining why NHR should receive such widespread acceptance amongst managers.

Lupton (1971) claimed that many of the statements made by the NHR writers were no better than speculations. He felt that there was no evidence to demonstrate any general link between individual job design and performance on the one hand, and organizational performance on the other. That is to say, that the former in any way caused the latter. Single, or even multiple examples, said Lupton, were insufficient evidence to support the kind of general proposition that Herzberg and the other NHR writers were making.

NHR provided a range of idea-techniques or interventions which sought to improve employee effectiveness and relations. These included job enrichment, participative leadership styles, improvements in working conditions, improved communication and consultation strategies, as well as team building training. The majority of organizational development (OD) approaches tended to rely on their commonsense appeal rather than upon any scientific validation. Kahn (1974) noted the relative dearth of evaluative studies of OD packages and in particular, of empirical studies which compared different approaches with one another. There were a few exceptions (Bowers, 1973; Friedlander and Brown, 1974; Greiner, 1977).

Watson (1986) attributed the popularity of NHR to its run-of-the-mill, commonsense assumptions. That is, what he described as a woefully simplistic generalization such as, "people only go to work for money" which elicited from managers the response "it's commonsense, isn't it?". It was a form of commonsense knowledge which was based upon easy, unthought-out, taken-for-granted assumptions. Anthony critically commented upon behavioural science management teaching. He felt that,

"One of the most noticeable characteristics of many of these writers on management is that their style is propangandist, designed to have an effect, to persuade. To be sure, in that the approach is supposed to be grounded in the behavioural sciences, there is often a great paraphenalia of proof, validation and experimentation. Blake, for example, has a whole chapter headed, "Career Accomplishment and Managerial Style" in which he sets out to prove his position. The assembly of pseudo-science includes the, "Managerial Achievement Quotient" (MAQ) which is the measure of individual performance, Blake presents the following example,

$$MAQ = \frac{5(9\text{-}L)}{\text{Age to } 50\text{ -}20}$$

in which 9L is the actual managerial level substracted from a constant 9, which is based on 8 levels in a hierarchy. 5 is a."constant progression factor" showing intervals of time in moving an individual from the bottom to the top in 40 years (Blake and Mouton, 1964: 229)."

Anthony (1977: 236-7)

Anthony was less then convinced about the validity of this approach as he went on to say that,

"The reader might well have concluded by now that managers would be better (and more cheaply) employed studying the entrails of chickens and he might also have entertained the passing thought that we were all wasting our time on such ponderous nonesense. The truth is that it probably represents one of the strongest influences on current management thinking, it is solemnly (and uncritically) taught in many management centres and universities and it has influenced the policies and structure of companies such as BP and ICI. It would take a considerable programme of research to validate the hypothesis that all behavioural science

management teaching is rubbish, so we shall have to content ourselves with the unproved assertion that most of it seems to be so."

Anthony (1977: 236-7)

9. Individual perspective

The different writers who make up the NHR management idea family all shared a psychological perspective in that they analysed occupational behaviour predominantly (although not exclusively) in terms of individual needs, satisfactions and motivations (See Table 2.5). Brown (1980: 166) was critical of the research on motivation in relation to work which focused upon the individual in the here-and-now, as if it were meaningful to study him in isolation from the society within which his attitudes were formed. Both Nord and Friedlander, separately, referred to the cultural emphasis placed by this school on individualism,

"... strategies for planned change, are strongly psychological; sociological perspectives on human nature seem to have been neglected. Again, though interdependence among people within organizations is recognised and stressed, co-operative activity beyond the level of the formal organization is seldom discussed".

Nord (1974: 559)

"The use of psychological theory to explain and understand employee motivations and values has generally been limited to the analysis of individual differences ... There has been limited concern with the influence of social location and social class upon the worker's value system".

Friedlander (1965)

The importance placed upon the individual perspective in NHR meant it avoided the need for changes in structural arrangements and hence in power relationships within the organization. Yet, despite its focus on individual needs, NHR did imply the need for structural modifications. Herzberg's job enrichment implied task expansion and increased discretion. Likert advocated the integration of the individual through groups which were to be integrated into the organization's official structure of decision-making by being made to overlap by means of their "linking pin" members. Does this contradiction challenge the thesis argument?

The answer seems to be that once again the proposed changes turned out to me more cosmetic than real. Watson (1987) argued that job design efforts did not represent any fundamental departure from the basic traditional principles. Kelly (1982) suggested that it was the exaggeration of the centrality of job specialization to Taylorism which led to the belief tha NHR job redesign represented a rejection of Taylorian principles. Kelly's view was that job specialization was of less importance to Taylor than was the general intensification of effort through increasing managerial control over labour. At times, this could involve making tasks less specialised rather than more.

10. Human nature

Before NHR content theories of motivation were popularised, there were two "models of man" on which management theory and practice were based. These were the Rational Man and the Social Man models. The former saw man expending effort to secure his economic interest while the latter saw him as searching affiliation and supportive interests in the workplace. The NHR theorists introduced a new model, that of Complex Man. This individual possessed a bundle of social and self-actualising needs. Given the appropriate conditions in the workplace he could show high levels of self-direction. Complex Man did not avoid responsibility but, because of the

Table 2.5: Summary of a sample of neo-human relations ideas classified by key dimensions.

Date of origin	Author	Label/ "Magic Words"	Topic	Level of analysis	No. of dimensions	Dimensions or "Magic Word" vocabulary	Preferred
1940s	Fleishman\ Ohio studies	consideration initiating structure	leadership style	individual	2	democratic and autocratic leadership	democratic
1954	Maslow	hierarchy of needs	motivation	individual	4	physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualization needs	high level
1957	Argyris	self-actualization	individual	individual			self-actualization
1959	Herzberg	Hygiene-motivation theory	motivation at work	individual	2	motivators satisficers	motivators
1960	McGregor	assumptions of human nature	leadership style	individual	2	Theory X and Theory Y	Theory Y
1961	Likert	participative management	leadership style	individual	4	leadership style - autocracy - benefit autocracy - consultative leadership - participative - approach	System 4
1964	Blake & Mouton	grid management	leadership style	individual group-organization	2	1/1, 1/9, 9/1, 9/9, 5/5	9/9 manager
1964	Berne	transactional analysis	individual behaviour	individual	3	parent, adult, child	adult
1964	Tannenbaum & Schmidt	choosing leadership patterns	leadership style	individual	5	leader control shared control shared control group control	as appropriate
1977	Hersey & Blanchard	situational leadership	leadership style	individual	2	task behaviour relationship behaviour	as appropriate
	Adair	action centred leadership	leadership	individual	3	group needs individual needs task needs	awareness of all
1970	Reddin	3-D theory of managerial effectiveness	leadership	individual	3	concern for people concern for task effectiveness	as appropriate
1973	Vroom & Yetton		leadership	individual	4	leaders decides, consults, shares, delegates	as appropriate

routinization of work and close supervision, he had little opportunity to exercise or develop such responsibility. The role of management was to create the conditions to tap this human resource. The NHR theorists are often also referred to as the **human resource management school.**

NHR's dynamic Complex Man model, fitted in well with the humanitarian attitude was attractive to the business community which, at that historical period, was growing in size and influence. Industry and commerce were having to deal with rising social and industrial unrest. Maslow's model of man was a central component in the NHR paradigm. Although he held that cultural factors could overwhelm "instinctoid" need, he generally treated human nature as fixed, and sought to discover the nature of constancy of the organism.

11. Quick-fix potential

Honour and Mainwaring (1982) described how early in the century, a consultancy tradition based on the application of psychology to organizational problems established itself in the United States. This tradition, "... *often favoured a short cut to rapid results in a highly competitive market"* (Rose, 1978: 93). The clear idea-techniques or interventions which were based upon NHR ideas all had the potential of being quickly implemented. The majority involved off-site training sessions (e.g. T-groups, team building) while others could be incorporated into company working processes (e.g. attitude surveys, confrontation meetings). As the chapter on marketing will show, the brochures of consultants who sold their OD services frequently promised results in eighteen months or less.

12. Ownership-contribution potential

A common characteristic of virtually all NHR ideas was their potential for simplification for a mass management market. Their popularity rested heavily upon the communicability of their core notion. NHR idea packages

were frequently constructed so as to be capable of being easily "unwrapped" by managers. In this process of unwrapping (that is, coming to grips with the fundamentals of the idea), the managers achieved a sense of ownership of it.

Maslow's "message" was interpreted as saying that it was easy enough to motivate people with simple rewards when they were hungry and insecure but once they were better off in these respects, then they looked for something more. The short struggle with the key concepts of physiological, safety, ego, social and self-actualization needs, and its hierarchical display (in triangular form) could give managers the feeling of idea ownership.

A popular empirical generalization made by OD practitioners was that organizational changes were more likely to be accepted by people who had been given a voice in determining their content. This was probably the best established and most widely accepted generalization in the OD literature. The pedigree for this principle went back to the Coch and French's (1948) study on the introduction of change. In the same way, NHR ideas were all capable of being adapted in some way by their users so as to give them a feeling of participation in their application.

13.   Leadership focus

A common theme of NHR was its emphasis on the involvement of workers. The promotion of these ideas co-incidentally reinforced the leadership aspects of managers' roles. Participation was held to be a "good thing" productivity-wise because it stressed adaption and the development of the individual's own learning capabilities. Moreover, it was considered ethically right to involve employees in the decisions that affected them. Blackler and Shimmin (1984: 55) argued that the romance and mythology of leadership in the management literature lead to several myths. One of these was the assumption that a particular leadership style was invariably more effective than others. This gave rise to two theories during the 1960s which identified a particular style as allegedly being the most appropriate for all leaders to adopt in all situations. Blake and Mouton asked managers to explore their own and others' perceptions of their leadership styles and to experiment with

the style considered the most superior - that of high consideration and high initiating structure. The leadership dilemma was neatly put by Bell (1948: 375):

> "... the problem of leadership is shaped by the fact that while we live in a society of political democracy, almost all basic social patterns are authoritarian and tend to instill feelings of helplessness and dependence ... our factories, hierarchical in structure are, for all the talk of human relations programmes, still places where certain men exercise arbitrary authority over others."

GURU THEORY

In order to bring popular management thinking up to date, it is necessary to consider developments in management thought that have occurred since 1980. This period has seen a great number of diverse management ideas being offered. One commentator observed that business writing had become big business. Publishers Weekly noted that *"Dieting, sex, whimsey, food and gossip are no longer first in the heart of bibliophiles. With no near competitors, business was the strongest selling subject in the United States in 1983"* (Maryles 1984; Freeman, 1985: 345).

At first sight, it appears that guru writings represent a random collection of diverse contributors with no linking theme, brought to prominance by a re-newed interest in business and management. However, closer inspection does give credence to Heller's (1990) suggestion that the central contention of this management idea family is that, *"the only object of business is to compete with others for the favours of the customer as King"*. Seen in this light, organizations seek to win by securing competitive advantage (Michael Porter) by offering fault-free products (J. Edwards Deming) and superlative customer service (Tom Peters). The goods and services that they offer are produced efficiently (Goldratt and Wight) and, even though large, these companies remain entrepreneurial in outlook (Gifford Pinchot) and

capable of innovation and change (Rosabeth Moss Kanter). Some corporations have achieved this and can act as models for the others (Akio Morita, John Harvey-Jones, Jan Carlzon, Lee Iacocca).

Guru theory seeks to to help managers build an invincable, innovation-led business system which can successfully compete in its chosen market segment. Since each contribution to this objective relies for its authorization upon the individual who developed and popularized it, the term guru theory is used as a convenient label to refer to these different contributions that have been so influential during the last ten years.

One can distinguish between <u>academic or formal</u> forms of management education and the <u>non-academic or popular</u> forms of management knowledge. Although the latter have been viewed with suspicion by the business schools, they have begun to penetrate the formal curricula. Thomas (1989) noted that it would be naive to equate the widespread purchase of any popular management text such as *In Search of Excellence* or *The One Minute Manager* with either widespread reading, common interpretation, or indeed any influence on the reader's beliefs or behaviour.

One does not even know if the readership of these popular texts consists of managers. Such problems are typically encountered by those who have attempted to investigate the social significance of cultural products. Even if *"... the student of popular culture teeters between cliche and gibberish "* as Goodlad (1976: 225) wrote, the risks seem worth taking. Formal and popular forms of management knowledge each have their own distinctive forms of transmission. Thomas (1987: 1) observed that,

> *"These forms of knowledge are seen as elements of broader, antagonistically related cultures which have co-existed with growing unease as management education has developed in the higher education system."*

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He went on to argue that the Thatcher government's promotion of the notion of "popular capitalism" and the "enterprise culture" with its critique of the traditional education system had given legitimacy to popular management assumptions. It had re-vitalised them, and had led to their extension to all forms of management education. Thus the growth in, and success of, popular management texts was a *reflection* of this underlying cultural shift. At the same time it constituted an expression of what he called the "domain assumptions" of popular management.

Thomas argued that popular concepts of management (its tasks, knowledge-base, mode of acquisition) were as old as management itself. They emphasised the practical, rejected theoretically informed knowledge and de-valued any form of formal instruction. Dismissing texts which might embody a codification of such conceptions, the popular culture of management has been sustained by its face-to-face transmission at the workplace or by experience.

The world of management texts, an essential part of the transmission of bodies of knowledge and of certification, has traditionally been the province of the academic system. It was only in the 1980s that the non-academic management book established itself. Freeman (1985), Menkes (1987) and Knowlton (1989) independently drew similar conclusions:

> *"Publishers, authors booksellers, agents, even the general public recognise their commercial value. Detractors continue to complain that best seller lists represent common and even vulgar popular taste. The argument will rage as long as books are published; so will ... a civilised attempt to come to terms with a phenomenon of publishing that will long be with us."*

Freeman (1985)

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"... the once staid world [of business book publishing] has been transformed into one where sales run into hundreds of thousands, sometimes millions, royalties are in six figures, business titles are best-sellers, and authors command huge sums as speakers at conferences".

<div align="right">

Menkes (1987: 163)

</div>

"... the growing popularity of books about business and business leaders, sales were up 20 per cent to 30 per cent in many stores last year, and business related titles recently took four of the fifteen non-fiction best seller list compiled by Publisher's Weekly."

<div align="right">

Knowlton (1989: 61)

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The American sales of the top business books are shown in Table 2.6. Hindsight may reveal the interest in business to have been either a temporary phenomenon, or the beginning of a continuing trend. This chapter section can only offer an analysis of the current writings as they can be now seen. Many business magazines and newspapers regularly carry articles about the best selling business books and the management gurus (referring to them as the "prophets of profit"). They address the business book publishing explosion as a generalised phenomenon and fail to make any distinction between the contents of these different books or the backgrounds of their authors.

An investigation of the management publications revealed that four different types of business book could be distinguished. The largest category consists of books aimed directly at minor business executives. They promise to teach them (as a quasi-academic exercise) how to do certain things better than before. For example, how to communicate, market, sell, or manage. In the United States, these are known as "how-to" books and they sell exceptionally well.

Table 2.6:   Best Selling Business Books in the United States (1979-88)

Year	Author	Title	Copies sold	Rating in the year
1979	Ruff	"How to Prosper in the Coming Year"	450,000	No. 3 among all best sellers
1980	Casey	"Crisis in Investing"	438,640	No. 1 among all best sellers
1981	Cohen	"You Can Negotiate Anything	205,000	No. 9 among all best sellers.
1982	Naisbitt	"Megatrends"	210,000	No. 15 among all best sellers
1983	Peters and Waterman	"In Search of Excellence"	1,160,491	No. 1 among all best sellers
1984	Iacocca	"Iacocca: An Autobiography	1,055,000	No. 1 among all best sellers
1985	Iacocca	"Iacocca: An Autobiography	1,510,000	No. 1 among all best sellers
1986	Halberstam	"The Reckoning"	208,000	No. 22 among all best sellers
1987	Batra	"The Great Depression of 1990"	549,000	No. 6 among all best sellers
1988	Trump	"Trump: The Art of the Deal"	900,000	Ranking unavailable

Source: Fortune, 13 February, 1989, pp. 61-3

The second category consists of the "what-can-we-learn-from" business books. These examine the inner workings of large, often multi-national corporations. They seek to learn from the evidence of success, to draw conclusions that would be of use to tycoons-in-waiting that allegedly form their readership. A popular form of this book genre are the practical reminiscences of successful corporate executives. These detail their managerial style or the financial coups that made them both rich and famous. Behind this type of book is the implication that the reader need only duplicate this style of behaviour in order to reach a similar eminance. However, there inevitably lurks a sub-text that actually implies that you must also be a genius (like the writer) to make it all work.

The third category of business book, more straightforwardly, seeks to explain the increasingly complicated world of finance, the stock market, exporting or whatever. A fourth category is represented by books which are survival guides seeking to help readers cope with difficult times. John Kenneth Galbraith called this sector of the publishing business as the *"cottage industry in predicting disaster"*. Titles include *"Surviving the Great Depression of 1990"* (Batra, 1988); *"How to Prosper During the Coming Years"* (Ruff, 1979); *"Crisis in Investing"* (Casey, 1983); and *"Megatrends"* (Naisbitt, 1982). The focus on this research thesis will be upon the first two categories of books mentioned and also upon some others which will be referred to due to their high volume sales. These do not fit exactly into the categories just presented.

Having distinguished between the different contents of the books, one can classify them more usefully according to the background of their authors. Heller (1986: 40) wrote:

> *"More pervasive, and more profitabale than the computers of IBM, were the acolytes of American management technology. They came from all sides - highly motivated professors of motivation, consultants commanding the world's highest fees, expatriate managers whose salaries (and tax positions) would embarress an Italian boardroom, visiting lecturers of every posture, sellers of packaged management development aids, witch-doctors ..."*

The authorization of a management idea stems from its author's position which can be based upon academic research, consultancy or experience of management. A useful way of considering guru theory authors is to differentiate between academic gurus, consultant gurus, and hero-managers as Table 2.7 shows.

As the label suggests, academic gurus are business school professors and others who have an educational institution affiliation. Consultant gurus are independent writers and advisors. Hero-managers are current or past chief executive officers (usually of major American or British multi-national companies) who are acknowledged to have been successful. Each speaks from a different base of authority.

Table 2.7: **Academic gurus, consultant gurus and hero-managers of the 1980s**

Academic	Consultants	Hero-managers
Mintzberg	de Bono	Geneen
Kotler	Naisbitt	McCormack
Porter	Ohmae	Kay
Bennis	Pinchot	Kiam
Blanchard	Peters	Avis
Ouchi	Waterman	Calzon
Leavitt	Golratt	Harvey-Jones
Kanter	Crosby	Morita
		Trump
		Iacocca

Contrasting these three classes of guru one can argue that, having been prominent during the 1950s and 1960s, academic management gurus are now experiencing more competiton. Amongst the best known academic ones are Michael Porter (competitive advantage), Kenneth Blanchard (One Minute Manager), William Ouchi (Theory Z) and Henry Minzberg (roles of managers) and Rosabeth Moss Kanter (innovation and organizational change).

The consultant-guru school was probably founded by Frederick Winslow Taylor. Its most popular current representatives are Tom Peters, John Naisbitt and Gifford Pinchot. These people are the inheritors of the traditional re-established by Peter F. Drucker after the end of the Second World War.

Finally, there is the hero management school currently represented by the tycoon texts of people like Lee Iaccoca, Harold Geneen, Mark McCormack, Victor Kiam, John Scully and John Harvey-Jones. The modern contributions in this tradition are practising (or recently retired) successful managers who write down the "secrets" of success and also take the opportunity to expound their philosophy of life. Henri Fayol and Alfred P. Sloan were probably the founders of this approach, but they did not engage in personal promotion to the extent of their more recent successors.

In discussing these writings the business press rarely if ever makes any distinction between these three types of contributors. They are referred to collectively as management or business gurus. The dictionary definition of guru is a Hindu or Sikh spiritualist teacher. The personal nature of his guidance is stressed. Gurus appear in all walks of life and in all aspects of business. They may therefore respond to some basic human need. One finds production management gurus (Goldratt), quality gurus (Deming) and financial gurus. This is an issue which will be considered in the next chapter where such a functionalist explanation is presented.

The use of the word in business journals emphasises three features. First, in the British press (but not in the American) the word seems to be used with a slightly perjorative tone. The Americans tend to use it more positively to indicate a far-sighted and visionary individual. The British business press

(perhaps reflecting British management's pre-occupation with practical and immediate issues, and with suspicion on anything theoretical or abstract), generally gives the term a negative connotation. Second, the term guru stresses the active search by businessmen for hidden knowledge or secrets. Third, it indicates the preparedness of individuals to carry out, sometimes uncritically, the recommendations or directions of the guru whom they follow.

Guru theory took off at a time when managers appeared to need extra guidance and ideas. The rise of modern management guru theory can be dated to the early 1980s. The movement is still strong. At one level, guru theory represents a break with the academically dominated neo-human relations movement represented by people like Argyris, McGregor, Maslow, Herzberg and Likert. At another level however, it represents a continuation of these ideas, albeit adapted to the circumstances of the 1980s and 1990s. An analysis of the message themes being put forward shows that employee commitment, responsibility, creativity, and putting people ahead of the bureaucracy are still very much in vogue. Peters and Waterman (1982) argued against the rational, the quantitative and the logical. They stressed the importance of leadership vision, culture and people and concluded that, "soft was hard".

The difference between the NHR and the guru schools has much to do with the underlying needs of managers. In the 1960s when NHR rose to prominance, its people-oriented message was set in the context of the American boom. In the United States, the 1946-65 period saw its industry at full stretch as it tried to meet unfulfilled domestic demand which had been pent up during the Great Depression. Such demand remained largely unsatisfied during the period of the Second World War. Hence, from the mid-1960s, after its internal demand had been satisfied, American industry turned its attention to the needs of European markets. The profits and industrial problems of this period led to a management concern to make work more interesting for employees. In this way it was felt, industrial action, absenteeism, and high labour turnover could be reduced in a period of prosperity.

The Quality of Work Life (QWL) projects were instituted to achieve the aforementioned aims and to increase productivity and employee commitment. Their purpose was to meet the inner needs of workers so that they would not go elsewhere. During the later years of this period, consultants re-interpreted the ideas of academics like Argyris, McGregor and Likert. The turning point for the United States and Europe came in the 1970s with the combined effects of the OPEC oil price rises, the Japanese challenge and the increasing political and social unrest.

The change was documented by many writers, none of whom became management gurus. The bringers of bad news are rarely rewarded. In this context one might mention Pascale and Athos (1982) who, while well known in academic circles, never achieved the popular acclaim or visibility of Peters and Waterman. Pascale and Athos might be termed "pessimistic writers" in that they berated American indusry and its manangers for their failures and shortcomings. They pointed to Japan and suggested that US companies should adopt their practices. While such comments might have been valid, they were generally resented by those at whom they were directed. Few people enjoy having their faults pointed out. Pascale and Athos' book sold in respectable although not astronomical numbers.

William Ouchi's, book. "Theory Z", represented a middle ground book. Published in 1981, he was an early wave guru of the modern era. Ouchi was not at all pessimistic about America's ability to fight back economically. He referred to Japanse industry, and identified aspects of it which were easily exportable to the United States. He offered his Theory Z as a hybrid which contained the best elements of both Japanese and American practice. He pointed out that some US companies, such as Hewlett-Packard and IBM were already performing excellently, and could provide models that other American corporations could emulate. Thus Ouchi was amongst the first to write about excellent companies and excellent performance.

Three books of the time sounded warning bells about threats to American economic dominance. Willaim Ouchi's (1981), *Theory Z*, Robert Reich's (1984), *The Next Frontier*, and Ken Auletta's (1984), *The Art of Corporate Success*. The landmark article on the theme was written by Robert Hayes and the late William Abernathy (1980). It appeared in the Harvard Business

Review under the title, *"Managing our Way to Economic Decline"*. These authors may have been perceived by many business management readers as prophets of doom. Americans do not generally like to come second in competition and are rarely satisfied with equal first. For this reason, these critical books were acknowledged, but were not huge sellers. It was Peters and Waterman who first provided the optimistic, up-beat message. They stressed that one did not have to look abroad to learn how to manage. Some of the greatest successes were American born and bred.

Before discussing each of the three sub-schools of guru theory in more detail, it is appropriate to make a few general points. First, modern (post-war) management ideas in general, and guru theory in particular, are American inventions. In terms of management textbooks, teaching materials, and empirical research on management topics, the United States holds an unassailable position. Thus, the phenomenon which is being described in this section of the thesis is American in origin. By comparison, the non-American contributions to guru theory have been negligible. This does not imply that the value and worth of European contributions, is any less. It is rather than they have failed to achieve a widespread visibility throughout the world. Guru theory as a phenomenon, is made-in-America, for consumption in America, but also available for export to Europe and any other parts of the world which might buy it.

Second, as a result of this, all the top ranking management gurus, academic, consultant and hero-managers are Americans. No British business school can claim to have a faculty member to match the international status or financial rewards of its North American counterparts. The only British consultant who has achieved any sort of international reputation is Edward de Bono, who is best known for his books and seminars on lateral thinking.

Some observers attribute the absence of any major British academic gurus to British managers perferences to learn from practical experience, either their own or that of other managers. Reg Revans, the British writer most closely associated with the learning-from-experience approach called Action Learning, has established a reputation amongst British management development experts, if not amongst managers themselves. Revans and de Bono differ from their American counterparts in at least one important way.

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Whereas the American gurus offer a *content message* ("use this leadership style, motivate people this way"), the British gurus focus on how managers can learn from their experience or use their brains more creatively. Thus they offer a *learning process message*.

In Britain, there are comparatively fewer opportunities for guru exposure. The United States has countless business seminars and conventions. Prominant celebrities can go on this "rubber chicken" circuit. There are of course management seminars in Britain, run by organizations such as the Economist, CBI and BIM. However, with a few exceptions, these tend to feature fellow managers as presenters. It is rare for a British management academic to be the keynote speaker at a management conference, although American management academics appear regularly. Some management seminars are entirely staffed by practising managers with no academics in sight. For example, one of the largest annual meetings of personnel and training personnel in Britain takes place in Harrogate and is organized by the Institute of Personnel Management. The contribution of such business academics rarely exceeds ten per cent. Management Today (1985: 73) commented that British managers believed that:

> *" ... lessons are best learned from practical experience, your own, and that of other people. The view that managers learn more from each other than from teachers is perhaps one reason for the extraordinary dearth of leading lights in the academic teaching world. No business school [in Britain] can point to any one 'guru' whose ideas are particularly influential; the ideas themselves seem to be old ones reformulated, the difference from previous years being in the methods by which they are taught."*

It appears that the production of gurus, whether academic, consultant or hero-managers, requires a collaboration between two parties. First there needs to be a supply of people who are willing to put themselves up for stardom. For example, some management academics such as Blanchard and Herzberg have promoted their ideas through public seminars and training films, while Iaccoca and Kiam have advertised their own companies and

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products in television commercials. Second, the book-buying public and the conference-going management community must be willing to support such activities.

The Americans do seem to be willing to support such a process while the British do not. On the U.S. business seminar and conference circuit the top management speakers can command the top appearance fees ($25,000-50,000). A British pop star working in the United States commented on television that U.S. audiences conspired to make anyone successful, while in Britain, the opposite was true. Perhaps there is also a cultural aspect to this point.

Finally, one can add the point made by Rein et al (1987) about the existence of a supporting media machine. While film stars, television "personalities" and sports stars, feed their stories to a hungry media (thereby attain continuing self-publicity and self-promotion) academics and business leaders do not have that same support. Such business guru support as there is, is stronger in the United States than in Britain.

As will be argued in Chapter 6, all gurus offer some form of reassurance to their readers. In an uncertain world, managers seek such reassurance. They want to know that if they only imitate these marvellous men and adopt their management recipes, they can overcome the most difficult management challenge. All the gurus gain their currency from their relevance to the changing times. Despite the fact that deep down, most managers may know that there are no universal rules of success (otherwise they would have been found out by now), they nevertheless continue to seek out and perhaps overvalue, examples of perceived success.

The inspirational value of the guru texts should also not be underestimated. The books extol the virtues of the managers deemed to be responsible for corporate success. America's business champions are presented and accorded heroic qualities. They are elevated, even if temporarily, to the position of role models. Successful entrepreneurs such as Mark McCormack give readers tips on how to stay one step ahead of the competition. The message of the guru texts is that everyone can be a winner, if they only try.

The three sub-schools of guru theory distinguished are labelled academic, consultant and hero-manager. Anthropologists have traditionally distinguished between *medicine men* (whose power and wisdom was claimed to be based upon a specific body of knowledge that they possessed) and *sorcerers* (who were held to have super-human qualities). Following this classification, one would place academics and most management consultants in the former category, and locate the hero managers in the latter.

Academic Guru School

The definition of an academic guru is someone who, while occupying a position at an educational institution, has developed and popularised his ideas on some aspect of management. Thus, Kenneth Blanchard, who has been a professor of leadership and organizational behaviour at the University of Amherst in Massacusetts, and who is joint author of, "The One Minute Manager", is amongst the best known and one of the highest earning academic gurus in the United States. His topic is management leadership which is very general and therefore has a wide appeal.

Most academic gurus specialise in particular fields. During the strategic planning vogue of the 1970s, Igor Ansoff was considered to be the leading academic guru on the subject. During the 1960s and 1970s, a small elite of academics working in the field of organizational development were the leaders in this field. For example, Warren Bennis, Gordon Lippitt and Richard Walton.

The contemporary scene reflects this continued specialization. Henry Minzberg (McGill University) wrote about strategy formulation and business planning; Philip Kotler (Northwestern University) is an expert on market strategy; Michael Porter (Harvard Business School) is an expert on competitive advantage. This is only a brief summary of some of the gurus. (See Table 2.8).

Although many of these people act as consultants, and may run their own consultancy firms, what distinguishes academic gurus from the other two guru groups, is their decision to remain in academic life. Despite this point, the

academic guru category is the most difficult to conceptualise. As categories, the consultant gurus and the hero-managers are more self-contained. The classificatory difficulty stems from the fact that it is possible to divide academics who are "academics' gurus" and those who are "managers' gurus". The categories tend to be mutually exclusive. A business management academic who might receive popular acclaim from management practitioners would be held in relatively low esteem by his academic peers. Conversly, those academics who were highly rated by their colleagues for the intellectual calibre of their researches and ideas, would be rejected by managers as too theoretical or abstract.

Table 2.8.   Academic gurus

Academic	Book	Original year of publication
Kotler, Philip Northwestern University	Marketing Management	1984
Porter, Michael Harvard Business School	Competitive Advantage	1985
Kanter, Rosabeth Harvard Business School	The Change Masters	1985
Mintzberg, Henry McGill Univeristy	Nature of Managerial Work	1973
Blanchard, Kenneth	The One Minute Manager	1983

In recent years there has been a blurring of such boundaries. Academics such as Mintzberg, Kanter, Kotler and particularly Porter, all of whom are rated as first class researchers by fellow academics, have also found a popular

appeal amongst managers. In addition to publishing highly technical books, these writers have also been invited to present their ideas to meetings of managers. Are we therefore witnessing the development of a new type of academic guru? If so, what has changed to blurr the division referred to earlier?

If this is indeed happening, it may be that as more managers complete MBA programmes, they become more sophisticated, and are able to understand and apply more complicated management ideas. Whether such an explanation is correct is difficult to test. One can probably make more progress by assuming that the American academics themselves have done something different than their precedessors to make their message appeal to two different audiences. Approached from this angle, one can test some of the ideas presented by Davis (1971) earlier in the thesis.

Davis argued that in order to be interesting to the widest range of listeners, the researcher needed to design the propositions to be communicated (based on his research findings) in a way that took account of the assumptions of his different audiences. Knowing that an audience would find interesting any proposition that attacked the assumptions it held about a topic, the guru needed to first identify and then publically specify, the assumptions about their topic (new technology, employee motivation, competitive advantage). He then needed to come up with a proposition that refuted them. There were however, some complications.

While it was relatively easy to come up with a proposition that refuted an audience assumption, it was usually difficult to specify precisely what this potentially deniable audience assumption was. The reason for this was that the assumption was not necessarily a unitary thing. The audience frequently divided itself into segments. The most important of these were those who held a common-sense assumption about a topic (usually managers), and those whose assumptions were conditioned by the intellectual speciality of their discipline (usually fellow academics). Berger and Luckman (1967) made this distinction between laymen possessing conventional wisdom on the one hand and experts possessing esoteric knowledge on the other. Further sub-divisions were likely to exist but the guru's task was to produce propositions which refuted assumptions on as wide a scale as possible. It

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may be possible to explain the across-the-board success of the new wave academic gurus in terms of their ability to identify and differently refute the different assumptions of their two main audiences - managers and fellow academics. Their predecessors were either unable or unwilling to do this.

Consultant Guru School

The second category of gurus are the consultants. Perhaps the best known consultant guru is the Austrian-born, Peter Drucker. Descriptions of his influence on Western management thought (that is, American management thought) dwell on the breadth and depth of his knowledge and upon his ability to draw on, and re-construct the relevant parts of his knowledge store into a form that can help managers. This is an excellent description of a medicine man in the traditional anthropological context.

In a unique article entitled, *"Why Read Peter Drucker?"*, Kantrow (1980) referred to Drucker's rigour of formulation and his encyclopedic knowledge of management and related fields. In the eyes of his supporters, Drucker has the ability to offer in-depth analysis of situations and to relate different ideas and facts to each other. While modern consultant gurus like Tom Peters may acknowledge their debt to him, Drucker may be said to be the leading Old Testament prophet, even though his influence is far from being on the wane. His books continue to be re-printed and they sell steadily. His progress has been steady and regular. He therefore contrasts sharply with the meteoric rise (and fall) of some of the modern gurus. Despite his more recent contributions which have dealt with Japan and entrepreneurship, in many managers' eyes, Drucker is still primarily associated with the rationalist view of management and organizations.

Despite espousing the Theory Y management style, Drucker advocated that managers made (rather than encouraged) people to become productive. He is traditionally identified with the notion of the large industrial corporation occupying the centre of society. This gives him a top-down image which is less fashionable in the world of the 1980s and 1990s which is seeking to

stimulate entreprenueurial innovation and trying to manage joint ventures and strategic alliances. If Drucker is an Old Testament consultant guru, who are the New Testament ones? Table 2.9 offers some suggestions.

Table 2.9:   Consultant gurus

Name	Publication year	Original book Title
Drucker, P.F.	1954	The Practice of Management
Blake, R.R. and Mouton, J.S.	1964	The Managerial Grid
Kepner, C.H. and Tregoe, B.B.	1965	The Rational Manager
de Bono, E.	1971	Lateral Thinking for Management
Crosby, P.	1979	Quality is Free
Peters, T.J and Waterman, R.H.	1982	In Search of Excellence
Naisbitt, J.	1982	Megatrends
Deal, T.E. and Kennedy, A.A.	1982	Corporate Cultures
McKenna, R.	1985	The Regis Touch
Goldratt, E. and and Cox, J.	1989	The Goal
Pinchot, G.	1985	Intrapreneuring
Deming, J.E.	1986	Out of Crisis

Hero managers constitute the third type of management guru. They are the successful chief executive officers who have committed their thoughts to print. In the classification system being used, they are the sorcerers, rather than the medicine men. The rise in the popularity of the hero-managers might be explained by the need of reading managers for gossip or the optimistic belief that they too could do well if they learned the tricks. Chapter 6 examines the evidence for the proposition that managers constantly seek unorthadox sources of power and knowledge and that they are eager to listen to those who have developed their own approach to ensure their own salvation through profit.

The hero-manager's approach is not based on research, study or consultancy experience. It is developed from learning-from-experience. Its authority comes directly from his success. By distilling the essence of what successful managers do (irrespective of context) it is believed that the secrets of success can be revealed. Thus, it is the hero-manager (there are few women) who are held to possess this supernatural force. The guidance is on offer. That same guidance if offered by a lower being, would not carry the same force. As will be argued, most of the "spells" contained in the books of hero-managers can be found in any popular management guide. They tend to be of the, "treat people well and they will work hard" variety. The difference comes from the person who writes down or utters the words. Because that person has been the chief executive of a major multinational corporation, those words are held to possess magical qualities.

There are two types of hero-manager books. These are the multiple-biographical ones shown in Table 2.10, and the quasi-autobiographical shown in Table 2.11. The prevelence of the former in Britain may reflect the lack of British managers capable of being elevated to hero status or their reluctance to commit their thoughts to paper. In the past some potential British hero-managers such as Sir Freddie Laker, Sir Clive Sinclair, Sir Earnest Saunders, Gerald Ronson and Asil Nadir have embarressingly fallen from grace.

The problem of having managers as heros is that hero-status depends not on one-off achievement, but upon the on-going health and prosperity of the company. This may be outside of the control of that manager. Whereas, consultants and academics can move in and out of companies, the hero manager has his future linked with one organization. In Britain, the majority of CEOs in well-performing companies have had a lower visibility than their U.S. counterparts. In Germany too, chief executives are entreated to, "be outstanding but not to stand out".

Table 2.10: Hero-managers: multiple-biographical texts

Author	Book title	Year	Hero-managers discussed
Cooper, C L and Hingley, P	The Change Makers	1985	
de Bono, E	Tactics	1986	David Bailey Chris Bonnington Mike Brearley Terance Conran Harold Evans Hans Eysenck Lord Forte Heather Jenner Verity Lambert Robert Maxwell Mark McCormack Peter Parker Clive Sinclair Jackie Stewart Virginia Wade
Lomax, D.	The Money Makers	1986	John Harvey-Jones Agnelli Anderson Morita Mody
Robinson, J.	The Risk Takers	1985	Robert Maxwell Terance Conran Asil Nadi Clive Sinclair Tiny Roland The Roux Brothers Richard Branson Gerald Ronson Ian Postgate James Hanson Gordon White Paul Raymond Jacob Rothchild David Thieme Ashraf Marwan
Carlisle, E.	Mac-Managers Talk About Managing People	1985	MacCallum MacCormack MacIntosh MacGuffy MacDuff

Horton, T.	What Works for Me	1985	
Kay, W.	Tycoons	1985	Nigel Brockes Terance Conran Michael Golder Harry Goodman James Gulliver John Gunn Noel Lister Robert Maxwell Clive Sinclair Gerald Ronson David Thompson Mark Weinburg
Ritchie, B. and Goldsmith, W.	The New Elite	1987	Michael Edwards John Egan S. Grinstead John Harvey-Jones Christopher Hogg Trevor Holdsworth Colin Marshall David Paistow Peter Walters
Peters, T.J. and Austin, N.	Passion for Excellence	1982	Stew Leonard Tom Monaghan Don Burr Jan Carlzon Les Wexner Len Stepanell Tom Melohn Bill Gore Max DePree Bob Swiggett Bill Creech William Schaffer
Garfield, C.	Peak Performers: The New Heros in Business	1986	

In the introduction to their multiple biographical book on hero managers, Ritchie and Goldsmith wrote that:

"the fate of British industry, the jobs of millions of people and the standard of living of the whole country rests in the hands of a few exceptional businessmen ... There have been some heroic struggles to overcome the problem pressing British companies towards bankruptcy. In every case, these desperate endeavours have been led and inspired by individuals. These are the men we call the New Elite."

Ritchie and Goldsmith (1987:1)

The second type of hero-manager contribution is quasi-autobiographical. "Quasi" because the successful businessman or manager, with the help of a named or unnamed ghost-writer (usually a journalist), recounts the secrets of his success and frequently uses the opportunity to include some of his own personal philosophy about life. This genre of managerial literature has a long tradition. The earliest form of it was produced by the Frenchman, Henri Fayol in 1916. In that year, the *Bulletin de la Societe de l'Industrie Minerale*, printed Fayol's Administration Industrielle et Generale. Indeed, as Pugh has pointed out (1984), despite producing a range of writings, Fayol's reputation rests on a single monograph which is frequently printed as a book.

Having retired after thirty years from the job of Managing Director of the metallurgical combine Commentry - Fourchamboult - Decazeville, Fayol wrote down his definition of what management is, and the principles of how to manage. He thus established the first place in a line of authors who have done exactly those two things. Each has expressed their view or vision of management. They have emphasised their particular understanding of what is important. Having done so, they frequently itemise the steps to be taken or principles to be adhered to, in order to fulfil that vision. At one end of this time continuum, is Henri Fayol, while at the other are Jan Carlzon, John Harvey Jones and Lee Iaccoca.

One should perhaps just notice a trend in this literature. As one progresses through to the present day, the general emphasis of these types of books is towards stressing the individual and his own qualities and contributions. By contrast, Fayol focused on the nature of the managerial task as he saw it. Alfred Sloan, in his book, *"My Years With General Motors"*, did not write about himself but about the history of the corporation of which he was an architect. Some recent quasi-autobiographical texts are shown in Table 2.11.

Table 2.11: Hero-managers: quasi-autobiographical hero-manager texts

Author	Book title	Year	Organization described
Townsend, P.	Up the Organization	1971	Avis
Edwards, M.	Back from the Brink	1984	British Leyland
Geneen, H.	Managing	1985	IT & T
Ash, M.K.	Mary Kay on People	1984	Mary Kay Cosmetics
MacCormack, M.	What They Don't Teach You at the Harvard Business School	1984	International Management Group
Kiam, V.	Going For It	1987	Remington
Avis, W.	Take a Chance to Be First	1986	Avis Car Rental
Morita, A.	Made in Japan	1987	Sony
Harvey-Jones, John	Making It Happen	1988	ICI
Trump, D.	The Art of the Deal	1987	The Trump Organization
Iacocca, L.	Iacocca: An Autobiography	1985	Ford and Chrysler

The primary attraction of the hero-manager literature, whether multiple-biographical or quasi-autobiographical, is as an exemplar. The management readers of these books appreciate that its author has "been there and seen it". He has been through the swamp and come out, perhaps a little scathed, on the other side. Analysing John Harvey-Jones' BBC series "Troubleshooter", The Economist (1990) attributed its success to the fact that it ignored numbers, filtered work and the challenge of management through one eccentric personality; and depicted companies through the people who worked for them (and not just bosses or balance sheets). All this displayed ideas and problems with which the viewer felt familiar. Best selling management books have done something similar.

The publishing houses have realized that they can sell business books by the hundreds of thousands if they create a market for them. They have therefore been developing ever more effective ways of marketing the CEOs and their books. Why do people buy these books in such numbers? Writing about the great and the good is a time honoured tradition which is not restricted to managers or businessmen. The managers who wrote their books had in most cases reached celebrity status before their publication. Thus they merely took their place alongside the TV and film stars, politians, pop stars and members of royal families, whose biographies and autobiographies have always sold well.

"My problem was I kept reading books on leadership and excellence and management when I should have been working."

Lee Iaccoca's autobiography has now outsold even Peters and Waterman's book, *"In Search of Excellence"*. This can be partly explained by the fact that few of the most senior executives of America's largest corporations have appeared 63 times on television advertising their company's products, or have been seen in 93 per cent of households in the United States. Moreover, few people have lived through the boardroom battles that Iacocca did. Thus, his high book sales are at least partly due to the high level of public visibility that he has achieved during his career.

Review of guru theory

Given the nature of the contributions the term, guru theory is perhaps a misnomer since it consists of a disparate range of writings by academic, consultant and hero-manager gurus. Nevetheless, for all their diversity, all these contributions to the management literature do have certain common features which will be highlighted in this final section.

1.   Management control

In the way they tackled their chosen subjects these authors acknowledged and legitimated the idea that the manipulation of power to one's advantage was at the heart of the management role. Managing and politics were seen as inseparable and the power to persuade was perhaps the most important of all. It is not that this idea was new, rather these authors made it explicit. The guru writers argued that if managers listened and talked to their employees, they could grasp control of the signalling system which pointed out the direction of excellence in the company. Managers could manage the agenda, nudge the day-to-day decision-making system, and thereby impart new preferences and test new initiatives.

2. Management legitimation

Many of the gurus, including Mintzberg, have focused on the unique aspects of the manager's job. They stressed its complexity and difficulty. In so doing, they reinforced the general view that managers were very special people who were doing a unique job. In the past they may have felt inadequate because they believed that they were expected to make perfectly logical decisions with inadequate knowledge. The rational man model stressed such managerial behaviour.

Guru theory challenged this. The emphasis of Peters and Waterman was on the "soft Ss". It had the effect of legitimating the anti-logical, pro-intuitive aspects of managerial work. Much of this is reflected in the right brain / left brain debate. Mintzberg's work is particularly relevant to this area. De Bono told his readers and audiences about the anti-logical aspects of lateral thinking ("the mind must wobble before it can leap"). The overall effect of such guru pronouncements has been to improve the manager's self-image and self-confidence. The intuitive, gut-feel approach that he used to be ashamed of was now applauded.

Mintzberg focused on managerial activities which he considered to be the components of a set of roles. While delineating those roles, he located their origin in the structure of formal authority. He promoted the ideal of managerial being rationalised through the careful specification and programming of its activity content.

The image that emerged from the guru literature was that of a "professional" who carried out impartially the universally and technically defined functions of management. In this vision organizations were assumed to fulfill societal and communal needs and by the application of their professional expertise to companies, the work of individual managers was seen to be socially responsible as well as personally rewarding.

3. Guarantee of pay-off

All the guru texts, have an explicit or implicit message of "how-you-can-do-it-too". For example, *In Search of Excellence*, offered a guide on to how all managers could make their companies excellent. Ouchi's book, *Theory Z*, contained a set of case histories of Theory Z companies. In *Megatrends* meanwhile, Naisbitt's "how to" recommendations related to the importance of tuning into "trends" (since they will take you to better times). (Freeman 1985: 347). Others show how to become rich quickly or to avoid personal economic disaster.

4. Series of steps or principles

Blanchard and Johnson (1983) in *The One Minute Manager* managed to distill the essence of management into three points. Ohmae reduced company survival into the "3 Cs" - commitment, creativity and competition. De Bono transformed his ideas into a set of thinking exercises. However, it is not enough to communicate a simple message. What is also needed is an explanation of the mechanics of implementation to the audience. Mintzberg has generally failed on this dimension. Dixon (1986b) reported how a participant at one of Mintzberg's seminar who had been told by him to encourage innovation, complained that he needed to be told how to do this. How was he to get his executive colleagues (especially those at middle management level where the worst inertia lay) to take the point and act on it. Minzberg did not know what companies should do in the future to make themselves more innovative. In the eyes of this participant, he only knew how it had been done in the past amongst a handful of companies that he had studied.

5. Communicability

As a generalization, it appears that guru theory has relied more on *how* something was said than on *what* was said. The book, the conference presentation, the audio-cassette, the video and the in-company seminar, have all been part of the message, and have supported each other. Despite his

depth of thought, Drucker said that he always tried to express himself simply. His view was that ideas had to be simplified in order to be effective. He wrote that, *"my ideas have only one moving part".* Although he offered his audiences "mind packages" such as his five rules for effective acquisition, he was critical of today's management gurus for making things too simple and too easy. He considered this to be both dangerous and destuctive (Kantrow, 1980).

Drucker's reputation, and that of consultants like him, has rested heavily on their ability to communicate. This was a point which has not been missed by the modern gurus. Blanchard and Johnson's (1983) *One Minute Manager* was written in the form a short story modelled upon the style of the parable. It used generous dialogue. His concepts, which were based on behaviour modification theory, were all ruthlessly boiled down and re-named. Positive reinforcement became "catching people doing things right". The book contained no arguments to support the prescriptions offered and was designed to be skimmed.

Managers reject flavourless textbook prose, and the stylistic and intellectual simplicity of the "One Minute Manager" gives it an appeal of its own. The book scored highly on the Flesch (1974) readibility score. It was simply written, high in human interest, full of short sentences, words with few syllables, many personal pronouns, and contained a great deal of simulated dialogue. While guru books like *In Search of Excellence, Megatrends* and *Theory Z* are not in the same category, they do share many similarities with the *One Minute Manager.* Blanchard discovered that managers generally read only the first chapter of any book. He therefore designed and wrote a single chapter book. De Bono communicates through the use of lateral thinking examples and exercises. Ohmae's message in his *The Mind of the Strategist* is graspable in a single sentence - to survive companies must become insiders in the so-called triad community of Europe, Japan and the U.S.

The text of the *One Minute Manager* is particularly interesting. It is both a story and it is pseudo-allegoric. It is a story because the technical information which is communicated to the reader is presented in short story form. The fictional narrative occupies just over 100 loosely-packed pages.

The layout and form of the book convey the impression to the reader of a short story. The continuity is however broken by the periodical insertion of checklist and plaques, the latter consisting of brief aphorisms displayed on an otherwise blank page (for example, "Share it with others").

The book is pseudo-allegoric since the allegoric form, *"carries a second meaning as well as that of the surface story"* (Stephen 1984: 23). However in the One Minute Manager there is no evidence of any second meaning and the text is intended to be read at no more than surface level. The literary form, while unusual is not unique. Ritti and Funkhauser (1987) wrote an organizational behaviour text which at first glance appeared to be a book of short stories. One can speculate that the adoption of this literary form made the text easy to read for the manager. This is what the endorsements said. The style serves to differentiate it from the other popular management books.

Anthony (1977) argued that the communication style of many of these gurus was propangandist, designed to have an effect, to persuade. These people did not so much explore ideas as sold them. Witt and Ireland (1987) claimed that Peters and Waterman's work was one of advocacy rather than of science. Like their predecessors, the human relations school, Peters and Waterman's ideas have left science a long way back and have rapidly acquired the status of a social philosophy or quasi-religion.

A point rarely mentioned, but which become manifest if one is either present at a guru-seminar or else sees someone like Tom Peters *perform* on video, is the potential for a charismatic delivery that this form of quasi-religious message offers. The word potential is used because not all management gurus take advantage of the opportunity. This feature has to do with their presentation style rather the content of the message. The great orators have all been salesmen. They have believed in their product and sold it hard. Scientific presentation on the other hand are by definition low key. They present a proposition with the evidence for and against it. The evidence is weighed and a conclusion is drawn. Thus, the content of a guru message has a greater impact on an audience than a scientifically-focused presentations.

ISOE offers a good example of the type of communication device that we have already examined. At the outset the reader learned of the distillation of the seven important variables of excellence. These are far too many to achieve maximum impact but were just within the capacity of short term memory. These seven variables were re-labelled so that they all begin with the letter "S" and thus provide the McKinsey 7-S framework which conveniently doubles as a logo as shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2:   7-S Modified Framework
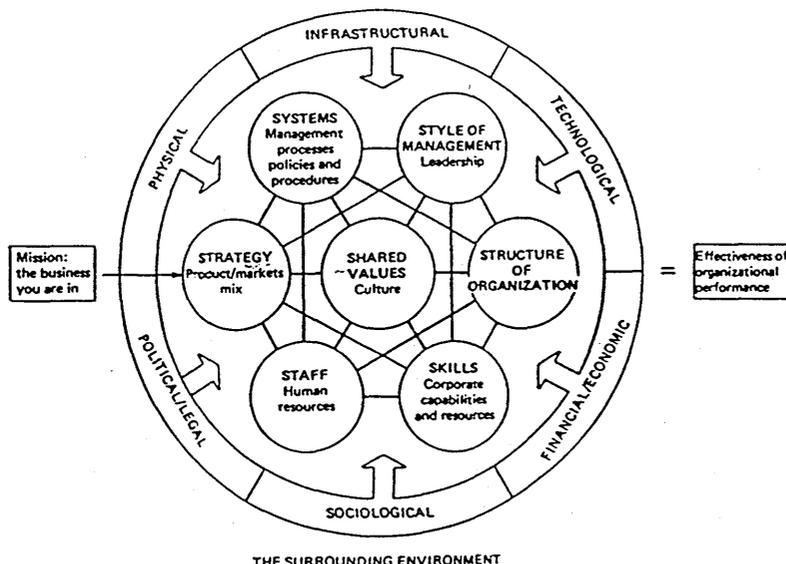
Source: Modification of the 7-S Framework originally developed by McKinsey & Co. (1981). Clifford, D. K. and Cavanagh, R. E. (1985) *The Winning Performance: How America's High Growth Midsize Companies Succeed*, New York: Bantam Books, p.114

Peters and Waterman (1982: 9) wrote,

"Anthony Athos at the Harvard Business School gave us the courage to do it that way, urging that without the memory hooks provided by alliteration, our stuff was just too hard to explain, too easily forgetable".

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In an audiotape on the subject of excellence, Peters informed the audience that after practice, he could label and explain all seven concepts in sixty seconds. He does in fact do this, hardly pausing for breath. Modern guru theory may thus be nearer show business or some forms of religious experience, and this may account for its popularity. Tom Peters is regularly referred to as a "management evangelist."

According to Anthony (1986: 163), the more effective the marketing of an idea is, the better the logo, the more memorable the saws, then the less likely it is that the idea itself will be deeply scrutinised by its readers or listeners. The excellence literature continues a well-established tradition of not encouraging its readers to think for themselves. Peters and Waterman demonstrated that they believed that the acronyms, logos and memory hooks were all necessary to the marketing of ideas to a managerial leadership who had serious intellectual difficulties to overcome.

Whether any popular management writer has ever failed by underestimating the intellectual ability of his audience is not known. However, the ISOE formula of reducing ideas to easily remembered steps to success may have been a decisive factor in enticing such a large number of managers to read and discuss ideas which previously they had not considered to be particularly interesting. Carroll (1983) felt that it was the informal writing style of the authors which gave it appeal. Peters and Austin's (1985) sequal, *"A Passion for Excellence"* carried the uncomplicated approach to "practicality" a step further. This time the authors suggested that only four and not seven attributes of excellence had to be mastered in order for a firm to achieve great things. This number is much nearer the magic three figure and is well within the capability of short term memory. While this book may not have broken new ground, it did sell many copies.

When the sales of business books slowed, they could be re-packaged into audio-tapes or turned into executive training seminars. Bennis and Nanus's (1985), *"Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge"*, sold 300,000 copies in hard and paperback yet still failed to make the best seller list for that year (Knowlton, 1989). It was then re-cycled as a popular series of seminars that helped Harper and Row sell more copies of the book as well as audio-tape

versions. Bernie Brillstein, the chairman of the Brillstein Group, has paid between $20,000 and $50,000 to option the film rights of Bruck's (1989), *"The Predator's Ball"*, which chronicled the saga of Mike Milken and Drexel Burnham Lambert's junk bonds.

6. Unitary perspective

Guru theory implicitly assumes a unitary perspective on organizations. In some ways it resembles human relations ideas in that it takes as its starting point the belief that organizational employees want to contribute to organizational goals and that the job of management is to identify and remove the bureaucratic barriers that prevent them from doing so. The gurus berate managers for failing to provide the leadership vision that would help to put all that organizational commitment into practice. Guru theory also echoes aspects of scientific management in its assumed belief that increased performance will benefit management and employees in equal amounts.

7. Universality of application

The gurus recognise that all organizations are imperfect. However, because imperfections and employee recalcitrance are regarded as endemic features of all human organizations, the ideal is to minimise the inevitable organizational dysfunctions by doing what is objectively necessary to maintain and improve the functioning of the institutional structure.

The solutions offered by the gurus claim a universal applicabaility. They all hold that manufacturing companies can improve asset utilization by the use of MRP and Just-in-Time concepts. There is no service or production operation in either the private or the public sector which would not benefit from a dose of excellence. No organization would reject the opportunity to gain a competitive advantage over its opponants. Every enterprise would want its employees to be creative problem-solvers and entrepreneurs. What firm does not wish to improve the quality of the product or service it provides

to its customers?   The list could be extended and the names of the relevant gurus inserted.   However, it is sufficient to demonstrate that modern guru approaches are intended for the very widest consumption.

8.   Authorization

Part of the appeal of ideas such as Blanchard's *One Minute Manager* is that they are modelled on the technique of Management - by- Objectives. MbO has the distinction of being amongst the most widely used and most influential management techinques in the post-war period. Moreover, MbO ideas and principles have now been generally accepted.   It has become incorporated into staff apprasial systems and have entered the subconscious of most managers.   To use a term to be introduced later, it has achieved "Level 4 structuralization".   Thus, when faced with Blanchard's "new idea", the One Minute Manager rings a bell of recognition deep inside of his head. It is therefore not rejected as cold, new and alien, but as something warm that fits into his existing stock of knowledge of experience.   Mikes (1984: 9) wrote that people will always choose the philosophy whose seeds they have been carrying around in their souls or brains.

A recurring aspect of the different guru messages is their commonsense nature.   If a new idea can be shown to be a version of commonsense, its threat to the potential adopter is reduced.   The main test of commonsense used by their management readers is that of face-validity - does it feel right? As the work of Davis (1971) showed, if the guru message lacked face validity it would be rejected by its target audience irrespective of its accuracy. Mikes (1984: 9) suggested that a great many brilliant and inspiring things have been said which remain brilliant and inspiring regardless of whether they are right or wrong.   Throughout the history of philosophy, he argued, **what** was said has always been less important than **how** it was said.   Dazzling arguments leading to false conclusions have always carried more weight and have been more celebrated than sound thinking served up in a sauce of dullness.

Commonsense is the sense (skill, knowledge, judgement) possessed by the man-in-the-street including the practising manager. Carefully handled, commonsense is the raw material served up by some gurus in their theories and pronouncements. The original belief was that if common knowledge (commonsense) was served to an management audience unaltered, it would be rejected as obvious. This is the Davis argument about uninteresting theories. The implication of this was that the management guru needed to dress common knowledge up by using special or magical phrases in order to mystify it to some degree. Thus, the relatively mundane managerial activity of visiting different parts of a factory to talk to employees was given the glamourous label of Management by Walking About and even an acronym to make it memorable - MBWA (Peters and Austin, 1985).

"They changed all the buzzwords and no one told me."

Battalia and Tarrant (1973) wrote more or less the same thing. They noted that many new management terms achieved overnight popularity, and then subsided into disuse. In their view, the managers using them did not really know what they were talking about. The gurus who brought the terms into prominanace used them in such a vague way that their true meaning could not be discerned. This was not accidental. The writers felt that the gurus were being protective. In any discipline, the person who came up with a new idea first surrounded it with a defensive network of jargon. This made it difficult for rivals to steal the idea, while also making it difficult for anyone to grasp the idea too readily. If the idea were transmitted in plain English, there would be the danger that the acolyte would quickly see the whole thing, and claim that it was obvious!

However, there is some evidence that Davis's proposition does not fit entirely as far as management theory and ideas are concerned. Davis (1971) considered his audiences to be essentially apathetic or hostile in their attitude to the ideas presented. The audience for management guru products is neither. To judge by the book sales figures it is both highly committed and positive, at least in the United States. Given this fact, the top management gurus seem abel to serve up the obvious while glorying in the fact. Thus, the first chapter of Peters and Austin's, *Passion for Excellence*, is entitled "A Flash of the Obvious". In it, the authors explain that there is nothing new under the sun and that what they will be telling the reader in the book is commonsense anyway.

The question that is raised therefore is why should commonsense be so attractive to managers? Why are they prepared to pay to buy books, videos and audiotapes, and attend seminars, to be told what they already know? The answer to this must lie somewhere in individual psychology. The question will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 6. Here, however, it is perhaps enough to say that for the manager to be told the "real answer" to his question (although not in exactly the terms he would have used), does two things. First it confirms his view of things and second it raises his self-esteem by the discovery that "the guru agrees with him!"

9.   Individual perspective

A substantial amount of advice that is offered by the gurus refers to person-to-person issues. There are exceptions as one would expect with such a diverse literature whose only common feature is temporal proximity. For example, Michael Porter's topic is competitive advantage, Eli Goldratt's is Just-in-Time and Oliver Wight focuses on material requirements planning. Even here however, if one digs deeper beyond the surface, one can find reference to people and their needs and motivations with respect to making the system work.

The majority of the gurus tend to focus on people issues. The essence of what the Harvard Business School does not teach you, according to McCormack (1984), is how to read people and how to use that knowledge in order to get what you want. McCormack's message on the topic is carried in two and a half pages of his book, and the wisdom is contained in twenty-four words - listen aggressively, take a second look at first impressions, take time to use what you have learned, be discreet, be detached, observe aggressively, talk less.

Lee Iaccocca's book of 341 pages contains sixteen pages which are devoted to the "Key to Management". Once again, the key is applied to the individual. Iaccoca insists on having quarterly reviews of subordinates' performance, makes suggestions about decision-making, motivation, delegation, and the importance of having a strong ego and the vital role of team spirit. Warren Avis, another hero-manager, tells his readers that success is attainable if you are willing to risk all and have enough capital. He adds that you must be prepared to put business ahead of family and all else. Success will come to you if your ideas, management and service are good enough, he tells his readers.

Finally, one can quote Jan Carlzon who informed his readers that it all comes down to treating people decently and asking them to shine. He stressed a market orientation and people involvement. Even Carlzon's closing maxim had an individualistic focus. He wrote, *"A man who does not have information cannot take responsibility. A person who has the information cannot avoid taking responsibility."*

10. Human nature model

The disillusionment with macho-management in recent years is reflected with the more humanistic approaches espoused by the guru writers. However, unlike their neo-human relations colleagues of the 1950s and 1960s who saw humanism in terms of rights, today's guru writers see it as a question of necessity. The heavy and direct forms of control have failed to elicit the employee commitment and creativity necessary for today's ever more competitive world. In the face of these future challenges new approaches are required which can unlock and build upon the unique human ability to innovate and tailor products and services to the needs of customers. The increase of women in senior management positions in the United States has also acted to stimulate androgynous management styles.

However, such innovative activity continues to take place within a boundary of managerial control which, if not looser, is less visible and obtrusive. The gurus encourage executives to think that if they get the essentials right, they can trust their subordinates to act in line with organizational goals. This saves managers the task of having to continually rack their brains as to how to combat lower-level employee obstrusiveness.

11. Quick fix

The general thrust of the guru theories is that it gives its readers two assurances. First, that if the advice is followed business results will be improved. Second, and in consequence, that the world will be a better place.

12. Authorization

The basis of authorization differed considerably between the different types of gurus. The academic guru work is embedded in research which can stand up to academic testing. In contrast, consultant guru theory has shown itself to be sceptical of scientific theories, and parts of it have returned to one of the less respectable philosophical positions - that of crude empiricism.

The search is on for *what works* (in terms of economic performance), in order to describe the characteristic features that seem to accompany success, so that these can be imitated. The search takes two forms. It either examines what the world's leading economic countries do (e.g. Japan, South Korea, Germany) or it focuses on the leading companies about which books were written (IBM in the U.S.; Marks and Spencer in Britain). Other parts of consultant guru theory, like the *One Minute Manager*, achieve authorization by provision of *"convincing explanations inside of the text, and a prominant display of authors' qualifications (degrees, consulting experience, previous publications, consumer endorsements, and lists of acknowledgements), outside of the text"* (Thomas, 1989).

13. Leadership focus

A distinguishing feature of many of the popular British and American business magazines, such as Fortune, Business Week, Management Today and Business, is the extent to which they emphasise the role and importance of the manager in general, and of the chief executive in particular. A current issue of Business Week is typical of the style. It contains numerous photographs of leading international businessmen. The associated captions read as follows:

"Italian Renaissance: Romano Prodi brings new life to IRI

"Rose: At 32, he may be on his way to building a billion dollar corporation".

"CSX Chairman Watkins: Assembling a Transportation Carrier of the Future".

"How Bob Price is reprogramming Control Data".

"Roger Smith: Revolutionary of the American Factory".

Research by Langer (1983) revealed that managers expressed an expectation of personal success which was much higher than objective probability would warrant. They tended to overestimate the impact that they had upon an organization. This illusion of control represented the overconfidence by an individual of his ability to produce positive outcomes. However, it did confirm a personal belief that he controlled events, and that events did not control him. This will be shown to be a recurring theme in the thesis.

As people in general, and managers in particular, are constantly seeking ways to control outcomes in their environment, they form hypotheses about the contributions that their actions can make to such outcomes. Hence they will seek out information that supports their hypotheses, while innocently ignoring disconfirming evidence. The popular business magazines, because of their orientation and style of articles, act to confirm the hypotheses that managers and businessmen have regrading their ability to control their environment.

The business press with its general uncritical veneration of business leaders is hungry for heros who can act as models. Conflicts in boardrooms, whether at Guinness or at General Motors, have the flavour of, and are reported as, television soap opera. The message that the media reports and the message that readers seem to want to hear, is that at whatever level in the organization, the individual manager <u>has</u> control and <u>can</u> turn things around. This runs counter to the alienating belief that people in organizations (managers and chief executives included) are powerless, incapable of having much impact on the organization; and are generally reacting to external forces over which they have no control.

Guru theory is strong on leadership and the message that leaders can make a difference. In his second book, Peters shifted the emphasis away from organizational processes per se and to the leadership contribution which gave rise to those processes. The various guru pronouncements, in their different ways, all selectively suggest that the reader is in control of outcomes. Pfeffer (1981) wrote that managers preferred explanations which provided them with the feeling of having control over events. In situations where such control was lacking, they used "symbolic control". For example, through making statements which asserted causal links between management actions

and positive environmental outcomes. In their adverts, consulting firms acclaim their contributions to a firm's good fortunes. All this acts to create the illusion of a management in control (Salacik and Meindl, 1984: 251).

A leadership theme which shines through much of the guru literature is an optimistic, "can do" message. Many of the contributions link the country to the corporation and the individual. At the national level many of the guru writers are saying that as a country, the U.S. can respond to the Japanese challenge, provided that the leadership is right. Many of the books offer a reassurance and optimism as the U.S. goes through a period of self-analysis and reconstruction. They strike a national chord - "God Bless America".

At the corporate level the guru books express a compelling confidence in the American business system. They preach the gospel of corporate success. Thus, Pinchot (1985) in his book, *Intrapreneuring*, sells the message that large companies can develop entrepreneurial instincts if they organise themselves to do it. Naisbitt, having emphasised the transition to the information society, ends his book *Megatrends* with the following rousing exhortation to the go-getting frontier spirit of America:

> *"We have extraordinary leverage and influence - individually, professionally and institutionally - if we can only get a clear sense, a clear conception, a clear vision, of the road ahead. My God, what a fantastic time to be alive".*

<div align="right">Naisbitt (1982)</div>

This chapter has considered the six most popular families of management ideas. The review has inductively identified thirteen recurring characteristics which appear to be found in the popular management ideas. These characteristics will be treated as hypotheses, and will be empirically tested. The findings of this research are reported in Chapter 9. The next chapter consideres the idea families in terms of the historical period of their development. It argues that, for a management idea to take-off, it must have a favourable combination of social, economic and political factors.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL DIMENSIONS

Introduction
Rational-economic period
Social period
Psychological period
Entrepreneurial period
Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

This chapter argues that the popularity of management ideas and their application in the form of management techniques is greatly influenced by the social, political, and economic characteristics of the historical period in which they are developed.

The chapter begins by briefly considering some methodological issues concerning the historical explanation of ideas. Attention is then turned to considering in greater depth, the history of the United States over the last ninety years. It is claimed that, with respect to the development of management ideas, four distinct time periods can be discerned. These are labelled Rational-economic, Social, Psychological and Entrepreneurial. Each period is considered at the cultural, institutional and motivational level. This enables an examination to be made of societal, organizational and managerial factors which contributed to the popularity and adoption of the ideas. At the end of each sub-section, attention is re-focused upon Britain to show how its historical circumstances facilitated the transfer of these ideas and techniques from the U.S.

The chapter argues that while managers running organizations in capitalist economies face certain recurring problems (e.g. maintaining control, increasing productivity, legitimacy), the particular management strategy chosen at any given point in time will be greatly influenced by particular social, economic and political factors of the period. A second conclusion made relates to the cyclical nature of these environmental influences. For example, the predominant view of workers as first lazy, then as self-motivated, and then as lazy again. Or, the attitude of government and people to business. First pro-business, then anti-business, and then pro-business once more.

The chapter concludes that aspiring management gurus can learn from the past. Specifically, they can usefully examine social, political and economic forecasts in order to identify the dominant concerns of the organizations of the future. These concerns are likely to influence which management ideas receive the greatest attention from companies in the future.

A recurring theme in the literature about the popularity of management ideas is the influence of the historical period. Many years ago, Victor Hugo wrote that, *"Nothing, not all the armies of the world can stop an idea whose time has come."* Other authors have made the same point:

> *"... new themes in the thinking of managers become more popular as the economic trends which prompted those thoughts touch the lives of more people. An intellectual fad is a reliable, if slightly lagging, indicator of underlying economic activity. So the first place to look for signs of a new fad is in the economy itself."*
>
> Stuart (1986: 119)

> *"... from the debris of these notions, the emerging view has been of less certainty and more variability in prescriptions for management practice. The conclusion should not be that Argyris, McGregor and Herzberg were wrong (nor were Fayol, Taylor, Mayo et al) but that their ideas were bound by place and time."*
>
> Wren (1973: 490)

Sutton et al. (1956) asked why some ideas appeared, received emphasis and won emotional support, while others were neglected and suppressed. Wren's (1973) answer was that management thought was a product of its past as well as the harbinger of its future. Each theory was a product of its cultural environment and found its roots in the evolving ideas about the economic and human problems facing organizations. It is therefore necessary to demonstrate in the thesis how certain historical elements in the United States facilitated the development of management ideas there, and how other factors helped their transfer to Britain.

Anthony (1986) felt that the history of management ideas could be best considered as a series of waves washing up upon and altering the foreshore before being swept back and replaced by other waves. The beach represented the body of ideas and techniques which guided managers' thoughts and it constituted an amalgam of wave action over a period of time. A similar metaphor had been used earlier by Bendix (1963) who wrote about the "historical legacy of ideas" and by Child (1968a) who discussed the "fund of available ideas." The wave-beach metaphor is a powerful one for those seeking to understand the history of management ideas. It permits one to distinguish points in time at which management ideas were initially born, and contrast the conditions under which they had their greatest impact.

The argument presented here is a sociological one which considers historical events in relation to movements in management ideas and their associated techniques. Despite their diffuseness, it is possible to detect societal movements. Two points need to be made. The first concerns the time bands of influence, and the second relates to the so-called "Ambrit" fallacy.

Littler (1982) argued that all processes of idea institutionalization and diffusion took time. Historical lags would always exist between the ideas of intellectuals and those of active practitioners. In the United States, human relations did not "happen" in the 1930s when Mayo conducted his studies. It only established itself and became institutionally significant in the 1940s in America and in the 1950s in Britain (if even by then). To ignore such a cultural lag, argued Littler, was to fail to locate an idea within social space.

Turning to the second point, Littler (1982) used the term "Ambrit fallacy" to describe the tendency to fuse the history and culture of two very different societies, the United States and Britain, and to seek to draw sociological conclusions on the basis of this unrecognized conflation. This it important when the transfer of management ideas from the United States to Britain is considered.

Finally, in seeking to explain the environmental background which has facilitated the growth of certain management ideas and adoption of their associated techniques, it is useful to apply Sutton et al's (1956) threefold classification. This distinguishes between the:

1. Cultural heritage

Considering the dominant value orientations of society as well as the broader cultural movements.

2. Institutional framework

Looking at the historical antecedents e.g. economic situation, unions, size of organization, research ideas around.

3. Motivational context

Looking at the needs and roles of members of the organizations, specifically managers.

Following the review of the historical literature on management writings, four major historical periods were discerned. These periods are shown in Table 3.1. It will be argued that each period provided the fertile environment in which the seeds of particular management idea were able to grow and flourish, first in the United States, and then in Britain.

Table 3.1:   Summary of historical periods

Period	Representatives (Examples)	Period of original development
Rational-economic	Taylor, Fayol, Weber	1890s - 1930s
Social	Mayo	1920s - 1950s
Psychological	Maslow, McGregor	1940s - 1950s
	Bennis, Walton	1960s - 1970s
Entrepreneurial	Peters, Kanter, Iacocca	1980s -->

RATIONAL ECONOMIC PERIOD

<u>Cultural heritage</u>

Derived from the philosophy of hedonism, the convictions of this period in the United States held that man's actions were aimed at maximising his self-interest. It was this which guided his behaviour. The American management philosophies up to and including the present have been dominated by a ruthless quest for the monopolization and exploitation of raw materials and renewable resources (cattle, people).

The general line of thought held man to be primarily motivated by economic issues, and doing that which would secure for him the greatest economic gain. The economic incentives were controlled by the organization, so the employee was a passive agent who, since he responded to economic laws, could be manipulated, motivated and controlled by the organization. Man's feelings were considered irrational and should be prevented from interfering with the rational calculation of self-interest. Organizations could and had to be designed in a way which neutralised man's irrational feelings and unpredictable traits. McGregor (1960) later called these Theory X assumptions.

Palmer (1975) wrote that the closing decades of the nineteenth century witnessed unprecedented changes in the social and economic realms of the United States. Between 1865 and 1900, the country was transformed from a rural and handicraft economy to an America which, by 1890, led the world in industrial output. Articulated most forcefully by the efficiency proponents, the new perception of labour was a radical departure from, older, populist notions.

The managerial perception was voiced in its crudest and least sophisticated form. It came to be subsumed under four distinct but inter-related headings. These were an acceptance of the inherited laziness of man; a perception of labour as bestial or machine-like; the endorsement of the economic nature of the needs and aspirations of working people; and a rejection of unionization and collective bargaining.

In the United States, several factors facilitated the shift to centralized managerial control in the 1880-1920 period. This represented the favourable backcloth to the development and popularity of Taylorism and his scientific management ideas and techniques. The process of industrialization in American industry was distinguished by the speed with which the economy threw off its familial frameworks and shifted instead to an economy of large corporations. By 1900, there were 1500 companies with more than 500 employees. Nearly a third of these employed more than 1000 people. This was not a situation which was paralleled in Britain.

One aspect of this, the creation in the United States of a high wage economy, created a large potential market for mass produced goods. This, together with the size of the population, set the economic context for the early development of the large corporation. This dominated the mass production and mass distribution industries. The existence of mass production provided the basic rationale for the application of systematic management systems such as Taylorism and later Bedeauxism and Fordism.

A second cultural feature was the character of the workforce. The industrial labour force consisted largely of immigrants. In the 1907-8 period these represented between 35% and 85% of the workers, even though the foreign born population in the United States never rose above 15% of the gross population figure (Littler, 1982). The effect of this was to create a wide social gulf between employer and employee. Noble (1977) argued that American employees of the time were more likely to be de-humanized and treated as commodities. The high percentage also caused ethnic turnover in some groups who filled the worst paid jobs. These people moved to better paid jobs as circumstances permitted. This created a culture of casualism, of rapid job mobility, and of transient links with employing organizations. In the period 1900-20, employee turnover of 100% per year was common in many factories. In such circumstances, Taylorist ideas were invaluable in helping to manage factories (Montgomery, 1979).

Workers could move between companies because of expanding job opportunities and recurring labour shortages of skilled craftsmen. Such shortages, together with an influx of immigrants, meant that because skilled craftsmen were rare and expensive, they were only assigned to important work. All the surrounding tasks were assigned to cheaper semi-skilled or unskilled workers. Simplification of tasks was achieved by task fragmentation and specialization. For this process to be successful, it required that some new means be found to co-ordinate and integrate the sub-divided work. The significance of Taylorism, at least in the United States, came partly from the need to reduce and keep down labour costs in the context of a high wage economy.

At the time, Taylor's ideas were considered as liberal and progressive by many employers and were not initially welcomed. Nelson provided a detailed account of the extent to which Taylorism was utilized and resisted by American industrialists and managers (Nelson, 1975). The ideas promised to create within the factory context what a young Princeton professor and future American President, Woodrow Wilson, had recommended should be introduced into the government service, that is, an end to arbitrary, corrupt and inefficient rule. Both Taylor and Wilson were confident that efficient management would drive politics out of the workplace and out of government administration. The idea that conflict could be eliminated by improved management had an enormous appeal to business leaders.

The spread of Taylorism coincided with the early and dramatic growth of concentrated large scale production at a point when the American capitalist system exuded a high degree of confidence. As an ideology and philosophy of labour relations, Taylorism's utilitarian view of motivation was compatible with this bold and self-assured period of American capitalism even though both owners and managers resisted Taylor's ambitions for total control of the factory by engineers. Scientific management was seen as superior to the systematic "industrial betterment" approaches of the time (such as those of the National Cash Register company) because it addressed itself to the issue of the control of the work process.

The managerial ideas and institutions which arose during this period appeared to be applicable to society as a whole. Taylor argued that the principles which had been applied to factories were capable of being used in homes, farms, commerce, churches, philanthropic establishments and universities. The managed organization replicated itself in these areas and gave them stability, order and prosperity. Taylorism acquired an immense amount of ideological and political influence through a cult of efficiency which came to dominate practically every aspect of American life by the early twentieth century. Reich (1985) wrote that by 1914, America had embraced scientific management with unabashed enthusiasm. In that year, 69,000 people attended an efficiency exposition at Grand Central Palace in New York to hear Taylor speak.

Institutional framework

The large corporations engaged in mass production had their own problems. Factories experienced bottlenecks, inefficiencies, poor co-ordination and inadequate controls. The managerial ideas that arose during this period were grasped by managers to solve their problems. They gave America the fruits of high volume, standardized production.

Businesses that standardized and co-ordinated their work achieved spectacular efficiencies. The management hierarchies which employed sophisticated techniques to supervize and monitor subordinates gained significant cost advantages. Successful firms invested in machine production and developed managerial systems. Throughout this era, the real benefit lay in the relative efficiency with which these inventions and resources were managed. The success of the companies which adopted these ideas and the competitive advantage they gained, stimulated others to emulate them in order to compete.

Managerial ideas were also used in government. As a high volume producer, the Federal government needed help in creating a stable environment for planning and co-ordinating these investments. Mergers and consolidations at the turn of the century had helped to eliminate distribution and marketing bottlenecks and these mitigated the initial problems of over-capacity. The First World War had triggered an enormous surge in industrial capacity so when it ended, the problem of over-capacity re-appeared. Plant and equipment in the new business enterprises imposed such high costs, that production at anything less than full capacity severely threatened a firm's profitability. Thus, each firm had to somehow co-ordinate the investment decisions with those of other firms.

This problem was only one level removed from that of co-ordinating productive units within a firm. Management techniques application to the firm were applied to the economy as a whole. Managerialism thus offered America a set of organizing principles at precisely the time that many Americans sensed a need for greater organization. These principles soon came to shape every dominant U.S. institution. The "science of management" as expounded by Taylor and Fayol, offered a set ideas for

controlling large organizations. These were principles which appeared to be as universal and immutable as the laws of physics. America needed a generic science of management as a response to a whole set of problems and opportunities generated by the new forms of production.

The 1880 - 1920 period saw speedy industrialization and was accompanied by a set of ideas emphasising individual enterprise, self-help and the opportunities offered by industrial and economic expansion. In the philosophical sentiments of the time, success and riches were regarded as the rewards of those who had proved themselves in the struggle to survive. Business leaders emphasised the virtues of character and Christian mission of business enterprises. A slogan of the time was that the "capitalists of today were the working men of yesterday, and the working men of today will be the capitalists of tomorrow". Poverty was not held to constitute grounds for claiming assistance. If employees remained in humble, ill-paid positions, this was because of their lack of will-power and modesty of talent.

During this period, management was forced to consider labour as a problem. It was insufficient to bewail inefficiencies and to dismiss those who were conspicuously unfit. Working together, employers developed common principles of of management policy and recognised that more refined techniques rather than polemics were what was required. By 1910 the primary emphasis had been placed on the "man- management problem". Methods were recommended as to how to increase labour productivity. Stress was placed on the idea that it was in workers' interests to collaborate with their managers' plans and to seek advancement in the enterprise by improving the quality and quantity of their output rather than by joining a union.

Scientific management's emphasis on work specialization, use of pre-determined rules for task co-ordination and detailed performance monitoring, allowed an enterprise to employ inexperienced and unskilled workers which was a boon to employers at times of labour scarcity such as the First World War. Additionally it meant that wages could be kept relatively low when labour was more abundant. At the turn of the century,

the U.S. labour force consisted largely of uneducated immigrants who were unskilled, had a high turnover and who were frequently in conflict with each other and management.

The growth in size of companies meant that their managements had few existing organizational models on which to base their structural arrangements upon (other than the irrelevant example of the Catholic Church).   In the United States firms became so large that the Sherman Anti-trust Act was thought to be necessary as early as 1890. The act did little to slow organizational growth and gave management both opportunities and problems. The opportunity was the benefit of the economies of scale. The problem was how to maintain control. The result was that managers needed concepts which allowed them to break these huge concerns into smaller, more controllable sub-units while retaining the economies of scale. Commenting on scientific management, Butler (1986: 287) said that:

> "It was a child of its age; an age of authoritarianism and an age which had fallen in love with mechanistic concepts of every type. Men everywhere tried to reduce the world to certain fundamental frameworks inside which society would operate, secure in the knowledge that 'natural law' prevailed."

Motivational context

Why were ideas such as scientific management and classical management supported by managers?   Bendix (1963) argued that the "survival of the fittest" philosophy of scientific management appeared to provide a justification for the absolute authority of the individual employer in his own firm, including the authority to weed out the incompetent. This represented an important element in the promulgation of such management ideas. Employers in the United States felt it especially important to assert their right to authority in the workplace, in the light of the dramatic rise in organized labour.

Sofer (1972) felt that scientific management at the turn of the century could best be understood in terms of the labour relations at the time. The growth of union power had occurred in Britain in the 1860s and 1870s, while in the United States it only began on a mass basis in the 1890s. Such developments were initially hampered by the willingness of immigrants to work for low wages. Between 1897 and 1904 however, union membership in the U.S. increased between four and five fold. In their counter campaigns, employers attempted to maintain an open shop and sought to repudiate the challenge of the unions to their own central authority. In the management of their own plants they regarded their authority as absolute.

Scientific management and similar ideas of the period made a constant reference to "natural laws". These laws offered managers limited options thereby re-assuring them that there were only a fixed number of possible actions. The "principles" upon which these laws were supposed to operate absolved the decision-maker of guilt in the event of failure. The period itself was still heavy with the legacy of eighteenth and nineteenth social and natural philosophers such as Adam Smith, Robert Malthus and Charles Darwin.

All these writers, in their different ways, had seen the world as operating upon certain principles. There had been the principle of the division of labour, of population expansion, of non-intervention in economic affairs and in natural selection. From the 1890s, Taylor codified the four "great underlying principles of organization" which he claimed determined the format and operation of organizations at every level and in all circumstances. It was in this spirit that both scientific management and classical management ideas were formed.

What managerial strategy and psychological contract between the employee and the company was implicit in this view? The involvement was calculative. The organization bought the services and obedience of the employee for economic rewards. It protected itself against his irrational actions by implementing a system of authority and control. Classical management ideas, for example, based upon the writings of Europeans such as Max

Weber and Henri Fayol, can be seen as complementing the "man-as-machine" theorists in that both groups sought to deal with, and make predictable, the irrational side of man's nature.

Authority was held to rest in designated offices or positions and the employee was expected to obey whoever occupied that position of authority, regardless of his expertise or personality. As the manipulator of these variables, the manager was meant to counter low morale or low production by re-designing jobs or organizational relationships, and by changing incentives or control systems. Employees were expected to do no more than the incentive and control systems encouraged or allowed.

Scientific management principles were embraced by the unions as well as by management. The unions saw them as a way of preventing despotism in the shop and for controlling the behaviour of their own members. Clear rule definition, explicit job delineation, detailed rules governing wages and working conditions and a grievance procedure based on a highly specialized division of labour, all offered union members a modicum of security against arbitrary action by the company, and a way of monitoring each others' actions. By the 1920s, organized labour was advocating scientific management as enthusiastically as business leaders.

Transfer of rational economic period management ideas and techniques to Britain

A fundamental difference between the adoption of Taylorism in the United States and in Britain was the time-lag. While scientific management had repercussions in the U.S. in the pre-1914 period, in Britain it did not have in impact until the inter-war years. What factors accounted for this time lag of adoption?

Our knowledge of early British responses to Taylorism is based upon data collected by Urwick and Brech (1948) and Levine (1967). This shows that Taylorism had a relatively small influence on British industry before World War I, apart from a brief spurt of interest before the outbreak of that war. When the wall of indifference and the lack of understanding was finally breached in the run up to 1914, the reaction was largely hostile.

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There are various indications of this lack of response to Taylorism in Britain. First one can note that technical journals such as *The Engineer* and *Engineering* took little notice of Taylor's first two papers. His crucial paper on Shop Management (Taylor, 1903) was totally ignored by all the engineering journals. Second, only one book on scientific management was published in Britain before the end of the war (Cassons, 1918). Third, Taylorism was not discussed a great deal at any of the meetings of the professional institutions (Urwick and Brech, 1948: 99; Levine, 1967: 61).

Such rejection was not wholly emotional or based on one person's views. The initial conscious rejection of this American import was due partly to the pattern of demand for many British engineering products which contrasted with that of the United States. In Britain, prior to 1914, there was only a limited mass market and few opportunities for mass production, and hence only a limited need for standardization and specialization of tasks. The war and post-war demand for standardized items like ammunition shells ultimately did replace the past pattern of varied and variable output and thereby made scientific management ideas more relevant.

A second difference which could account for the time lag was the rejection of scientific management ideas by British employers. Opposition came from Liberal and Quaker owners such as Cadbury who felt that it would lead to excessive speeding up, debase the worker and cause serious conflicts between capital and labour. Employers were particularly concerned about the high-wage strategy which was a key element in the U.S. version of scientific management. Such a view was grounded in British class-based notions of appropriate wage levels.

At the turn of the century, engineering employers had sought to reduce wages to combat foreign competition. In Britain, labour tended to be viewed as a residual problem and as an obstacle to the path of technological advance and progress. Pollard (1965) suggested that it was only much later that the new view emerged that the productivity of workers was as important as the productivity of machines, and that it might be worth investing in the development of workers. On the human side, British engineers stressed the

high administrative and supervisory costs of Taylorism, and were unconvinced about gaining increased profitability from the application of scientific management ideas in their firms.

Prior to the First World War therefore, the social and economic circumstances in Britain did not favour the adoption of Taylorism. The family-based, entrepreneurial small business dominated and had not, as in the United States, given way to the large corporation. Sofer (1972) wrote that although the rise of British union power preceded the American by twenty or thirty years, the rise of British awareness about new needs and potentialities in labour relations did not come as early as one would have imagined given the stress on intensive industrialization. In a period dominated by pioneers and founding managers, it was these people who were apt to emphasise the individuality of the workers and the uniqueness of the enterprise rather than to generalize recurring needs. Prior to 1914, the development of new ideas and practices in Britain was not congenial to an integrated theory of organization as it was in the United States. This was one of the major differences between the two societies and it was reflected in the response to scientific management ideas crossing the Atlantic.

The evidence therefore shows that before 1914, British ignorance, indifference and hostility to Taylorism resulted in no widespread shift in employer beliefs. It might be that better established philosophies derived from Nonconformism and the technical training schools meant that there was no real (far less any experienced) need for ideas such as those of Taylor. What then changed in the post-1918 period to make scientific management ideas more relevant and more widely adopted in Britain?

At the company level, the enormous and continuing demands during the war had created stable markets for factories. This led them to develop mass production methods and some standardization. Managers had to staff their factories with unskilled labour, especially women, and this led to the erosion of skill differentials. Moreover, trade unions had gained new status and power, and managers had to consult trade union leaders for the first time. Later, the Depression of the 1920s led to calls for rationalization which referred to efforts to secure the minimum of waste of either effort or material. In Britain, it mainly referred to the large scale horizontal mergers

of firms, and to a lesser extent, to the application of scientific methods of management and control. Through the 1930s, these ideas were promoted by Lyndall Urwick who saw rationalization as a natural extension of scientific management beyond its application to individual firms.

Prior to 1914 the continued family framework of many British industries meant that the development of new organizational forms was impeded. Families and entrepreneurs attempted to retain ownership and control as long as possible. In the 1918-28 period however, corporate capitalism made some headway as a result of industrial concentration. By 1939, corporate capitalism had developed rapidly. "Rationalised management" as it came to be called in Britain, was promoted by Charles Bedeaux who diffused Taylorist workshop practices and opened the way for the spread of neo-Taylorite systems. The history of scientific management in Britain in the inter-war years is largely the history of the Bedeaux system.

The pressures of the First World War and the American involvement in that war, led to a transatlantic flow of ideas about management and industrial organization. Technical missions were sent to the United States and these returned with practical experience of Taylorist practices. After the war, scientific management became embedded within broader perceptions of America as a model of industrial productivity and prosperity. A commentator of the time observed that, *"Such visions of progress and prosperity acted as cultural conduits by means of which the ideas of Taylorism seeped into the European consciousness".*

It was not until the late 1920s and early 1930s that the problems of the British economy and employers' became desperate (and when they sought to lower costs), that a broad and continued interest was created in what scientific management had to offer. Between 1918 and the mid-1920s, Taylorite schemes began to filter onto British factory shopfloors with the initial attention being paid to time-study and more systematic payment systems. By 1937, 225 companies were using the Bedeaux version of scientific management (Thurley and Wirdenuis, 1973).

The rapid spread of this approach through the 1930s in Britain was partly accounted for by the growing number of firms in the new and expanding industries of the period such as food processing, light engineering and motor components. Taylorism was introduced to British shopfloors during a period of high unemployment, short time working and contracting markets. Such savings on labour costs in a stagnant market could only come from cutting the total hours paid, that is, from redundancies. The most likely reason for the ultimate acceptance of work study in the 1940s and 1950s, however, were probably the boom conditions. In these circumstances, increased efficiency led not to redundancies but to higher wages for the increased output in a sellers' market. Thus in the end, Taylorism sneaked into Britain very late being allowed in by workers and their unions under the growth conditions of the Second World War and its aftermath.

SOCIAL PERIOD

Human relations ideas were based on the writings of Elton Mayo and the Hawthorne studies. Schwab and Cummings (1970) commented that an essentially unsupported interpretation of the results was so quickly and widely accepted that the underlying theory was neither questioned nor refined. What was it about that time period in the United States that created such a hunger for these human relations ideas?

Some writers claimed that no action was without a counterveiling reaction and that Taylor's thrust of scientific management generated its own counter ideology in the form of human relations ideas. This reaction waned over time but it never totally de-railed the original ideological thrust which found new allies in the positivism and behaviourism that came to characterize social science and management teaching in the middle years of the century. Anthony (1977: 223) wrote that:

"The very widespread influence of Elton Mayo's work and the apparent scientific respectability of the Hawthorne experiments had established a reaction to the belief in the techniques of scientific management as sufficient in themselves. The techniques and management principles with which they were associated were rarely questioned, but a belief began to spread that they could be taken too far, and that there were other influences. It was as though a romantic movement in management was beginning to follow the age of reason; reason was never entirely discredited, but it began to be recognized that other forces, some of them dark and mysterious had to be accounted for in exploring and influencing human behaviour."

That romantic movement reflected several themes which, in Wren's (1973) view, were products of the cultural environment of the period. These were the call for social, human skills rather than technical ones; an emphasis on re-building peoples' sense of belonging through groups and social solidarity in order to overcome the "confusion of souls"; and a concern with equalizing power through unions, through participative leadership and by fusing the formal organization with the social system of the factory.

Human relations ideas basically held that industrial society was a shakey fabric. Its scale, diversity and constant change meant that it frustrated the basic human desire for intimacy, consistency and predictability in social living. People looked for this in their jobs instead. However, the rationalization of work had resulted in a loss of meaning in the technical aspects of work. Employees now had to focus on social relationships on the job. Lacking a wider certainty and intimacy, they purposely sought to manufacture these at the workplace by means of the informal organization. Man was held to be more responsive to the social forces of his peer group than to the controls and incentives of management. Hence, an employee's responsiveness to management was seen to depend on the extent to which a supervisor could meet his social needs and needs for acceptance. Mayo's studies initiated a sociological orientation to work relations. The generalizations shown in Table 3.2. summarizes what Miller and Form (1964: 677) called the *"core of the Mayo heritage"*.

Human relations ideas developed and spread through the United States between the two world wars. The experience of the first war, continued cycles of boom and bust, and persistent industrial conflict greatly discredited the precepts of early laissez-faire capitalism. Various intellectual currents had developed which challenged the naive rationalist utilitarian view on which Taylorism was at least partially based. Shortly before the beginning of the 1929 Depression, Magnus Alexander addressed the World Engineering Congress in Tokyo. He spoke about the tendency towards consolidation and association for greater efficiency, careful planning on the basis of diligent research, and concern over the ramifications and effects of economic life over social progress. The emphasis, in his view, was shifting towards the voluntary assumption of social obligations and co-operative effort in the common interest (Hughes, 1958).

Just as the engineering purity of Taylor was not followed to the letter by the ever pragmatic U.S. managers, so too the social philosophy of Mayo was selectively adopted. American capitalists eclectically took advantage of whatever they found of use, first in Taylor's and then in Mayo's prescriptions for industry. Mayo's philosophy was far more alien to capitalists than Taylor's engineering world view. Indeed, Mayo's theoretical disengagement from the dynamics of profit and competition ran contrary to what were owners' and managers' top priorities - the pursuit of profit and corporate survival. So, what then was it about this period in America that encouraged the growth of these human relations ideas?

Table 3.2.   Human relations ideas

	Generalization	Drawn from
1.	Work is a group activity	All Harvard industrial research studies.
2.	The social world of the adult is primarily patterned around work activity.	Textile mill; relay assembly test room.
3.	The need for recognition, security, and sense of belonging is more important in the determination of worker's morale and productivity than the physical conditions under which he works.	Relay assembly test room.
4.	A complaint is not necessarily an objective recital of facts; it is commonly a *symptom* manifesting disturbance of an individual's status position.	Interviewing programme.
5.	The worker is a person whose attitudes and effectiveness are conditioned by social demands from both outside and inside the work plant.	Relay assembly test room; bank wiring observation room;
6.	Informal groups within the work plant exercise strong social over the work habits and attitudes of the individual worker.	Bank wiring observation room; metal working companies.
7.	The first line supervisor is the single most important factor in determining the morale and productivity of a work group.	Metalworking companies; Southern California aircraft companies.
8.	The change from an established to an adaptive society tends continually to disrupt the social organization of a work plant and industry generally.	Southern California aircraft companies.
9.	Group collaboration does not occur by accident; it must be planned for and developed. If group collaboration is achieved, the work relations within a work plant may reach a cohesion which resists the disrupting effects of an adaptive society."	Southern California aircraft companies

Cultural heritage

Sutton et al (1956) identified a set of new values which they felt had emerged during the 1940s and which were grounded in the cultural heritage of the U.S. These stressed activism, egalitarianism, universalism and social responsibility. These new values were compatible with human relations ideas and supported and initiated changes in the institutional and motivational spheres. In addition, American society, despite differences in the intellectual outlook of its diverse classes and groups, emphasised the individual, the value of experiential knowledge and subjective feelings.

By the 1950s, the concept of alienation had been given widespread currency through sociology. Its main application was in describing the problems of workers in blue collar jobs. The problem of control was highlighted by economic expansion and consequent full employment. Massive absenteeism and labour turnover in the United States produced problems of low productivity. Other factors too made it necessary to consider the well-being of workers. Because of full employment there was no longer a queue of substitute workers prepared to take jobs under any conditions. If both trained and untrained workers were to be retained, working conditions had to be considered. This point was impressed upon management by the continuous sabotage of the production line which, with the aforementioned problems, damaged productivity.

Watson (1986) argued that it was in the two decades following the end of the Second World War that human relations ideas had their greatest impact upon managers. They did not break the grip of scientific management thinking upon job design. What they did do was to overlay these now standard work structuring practices with some ameliorating supervisory and welfare practices. Watson (1986) felt that the exploitative and de-humanizing edge could be taken off Taylorist practices in a way which made them more tolerable and more suited to the new post-war world of full employment. The research evidence and academic credibility of the human relations writers provided a rationale for an element of "caring" in management which became more acceptable than the older rationales of paternalistic and religious welfarism which had played a similar role in earlier times.

The social man model upon which human relations ideas were based represented a response to the increasing sophistication of a population which in the Great Depression had become aware that the interests of management and the interests of workers were often very different. Landsberger (Mouzalis, 1967: 206) commented that the quick and uncritical acceptance of Mayo's tentative conclusions on supervisory skills and training manifested, produced *"the widespread craving among business circles for a new management ethic and for an easy, unpainful solution of industrial conflict."*

The traditional authority of management was suddenly challenged. Management realised that the social context (group) in which the individual was embedded could often influence him just as much as management. Thus management development became a matter of teaching managers about groups, informal organization, social motivation, ascribed authority and democratic leadership.

In Rose's (1978) view, human relations ideas were a response to the practical problems occurring in the stage of industrialization reached by American industry in the late 1920s which had become aggravated by the militancy of labour in the 1930s. What made Mayo unique, was his ability to recognize these emerging social problems and to popularize attractive explanations and solutions. In the process he turned himself into a kind of "human relations superstar".

Institutional framework

Davis (1967) suggested a number of reasons for the popularity of human relations ideas in American companies. He saw these as being linked to the size of organizations, trade union expansion, and worker specialization and training. Considering each in turn, he noted that the increased size of U.S. corporations was accompanied by problems of management control. The bureaucratization of industrial organizations at the time meant an increase in their complexity. Span of control was increased but effective supervision reduced. A new set of management ideas was therefore needed to direct and control the activities of workers since greater amounts of authority and responsibility accrued to lower level supervisors as their companies increased in size.

Turning to labour union expansion, Davis (1967) showed that the 1933-7 period in the United States saw union membership grow from three to seven million. The National Labour Act of 1935 established the right of employees to organize without coercion or interference from management. The most significant aspect of this trend was that it generated a need for specialist management personnel to negotiate labour agreements. From 1933 onwards therefore, personnel specialists took over much of the administrative and strategic responsibility for labour negotiations. Thus a new and cohesive management group came into being which would later become a prime consumer of human relations ideas and its associated techniques.

Bendix (1963) noted that unionization forced management to direct its attention to the attitudes and feelings of workers. Management had to deal with workers as people who had legitimate aspirations and opinions. The employer's use of human relations ideas could be seen as an attempt to enlist the co-operation of workers and thereby counter the threat of unions while re-asserting absolute management authority.

Mayo himself did not tie his human relations ideas to the growth of the union movement at the time. Instead he linked his proposals to the conservative sentiments of business leaders by advocating the non-intervention of government. His ideas therefore struck a positive chord amongst the very people who were located most strategically to allocate research funds, establish institutes and promulgate his ideology.

During the 1940s and 1950s, human relations ideas and techniques posited a social mission for managers which was to recreate within the enterprise, a web of satisfying social relationships that industrialization had destroyed within the wider society. Writing at this time, Drucker (1954) agreed with the human relations view that the business enterprise represented a viable community in its own right. Faced with the problem of legitimising their own authority at the time, Drucker proposed that such legitimation could be secured by a limited extension of employee decision-making to what he described, with considerable exaggeration as a "self-governing plant community."

Human relations ideas also prospered because they became institutionalised in the major American universities. The Hawthorne studies had provided a stimulus for, and gave an impetus to further sociological work in industry. However, Mayo's work was not unique even at that time. Other academics, Whiting Williams and Henri DeMan, were also writing in the behavioural field.

The first university course in human relations was offered in 1936. By 1946 it became a required course at the Harvard Business School. Saltonstall (1959) wrote that, "teachers in universities were the first to pick up the Williams and Mayo ideas as worthy of further thought and experimentation". The role of business school academics as promulgators of management ideas will be discussed in Chapter 4. The major educational institutional support for human relations ideas came at the end of the Second World War, at a time of intense union activity and strikes. Institutes and schools of business were established at Chicago (1943), Yale (1944), Cornell (1945), Berkeley (1945), Michigan (1946) and Illinois (1946).

The slow but growing influence of psychology and sociology, collectively referred to as the "behavioural perspective" increased progressively through the twentieth century. It took off rapidly in the 1945-50 period, a time which coincided with the influence of human relations ideas coming from industry. Aronoff (1975) analysed twenty-eight general management textbooks published between 1910 and 1974 in order to trace the increase in the behavioural perspective within the discipline of management by analysing the number of behavioural terms used. His analysis is shown in Figure 3.1.

Aronoff's analysis revealed the growth of behavioural science teaching in management schools at American universities. By 1922 at least ten institutions were teaching management. The management textbooks of the 1920s stressed the importance of employee attitude, concern with the individual's ego and environment. They contained the beginnings of discussions on industrial relations, leadership, motivation, social relations and social structure.

Figure 3.1: Total of Behavioural Terms per Management Textbook Over Time. From Aronoff (1975: 761).

Total of Behavioral Terms per Management Text over Time
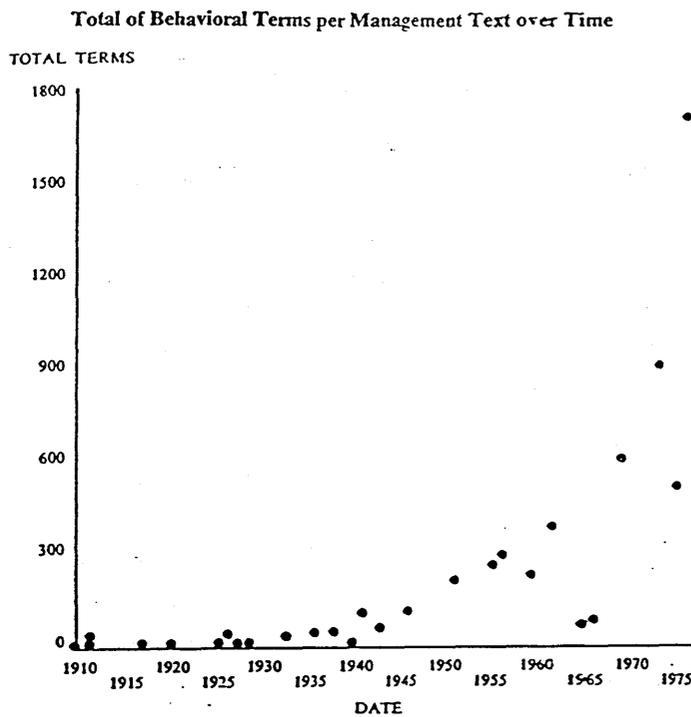
Motivational context

Sutton et al (1956) argued that three main factors oriented the businessmen of the time towards human relations ideas. First, the conflicting demands of their particular position and the broader values of society. Second, the gaps between the demands of social positions and the capabilities of the people who occupied those positions. Third, the inherently conflicting demands which were built into the definition of certain management roles.

Bendix (1963) argued that another essential feature of the motivational context was managers' need for achievement, success and career advancement. The strongest advocates of the "new management" of human relations were the junior managers rather than the senior executives. Human relations ideas represented a way for them to increase their influence and effectiveness within the bureaucratic organization. Human relations ideas in Bendix's view, became another tool for internal politics and career advancement within the organization.

Mayo's ideas appealed to the American manager of the time since they assigned to him a central place in the successful working of contemporary society. Many believed that the relationship between the individual and society had been damaged by industrialization and urbanization. This relationship could be restored in his view through managing organizations in such a way that there would be a spontaneous collaboration towards a common purpose. Mayo's appeal to managers, was also partly based on the contention that their subordinates were illogical, that such unco-operativeness represented a frustrated urge to collaborate, that their demands for money masked a need for managerial approval, and that as managers they had a historic destiny to be the brokers of social harmony.

It was not only line managers who gave human relations ideas their support. The growth of personnel specialists has already been mentioned. Company trainers and consultants could also be numbered as Mayo's supporters. Training in interpersonal skills seemed to provide a vehicle with which human relations ideas could be applied within the organization. It was upon such courses that management training as a specialist company function built itself within the large corporations. Independent consultants began making a living from this work and still do to this day.
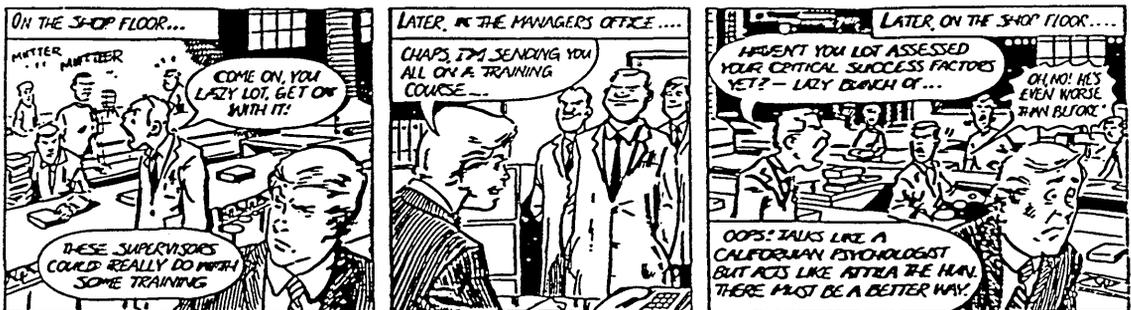
Source: <u>Works Management</u>, August 1989, p. 17.

Transfer of human relations ideas to Britain

The period which saw the greatest introduction and diffusion of human relations ideas in Britain was that between 1945 and 1955. Anthony (1986) argued that it took nearly twenty years for the implications of the Hawthorne experiments to begin to have an impact on British management thinking and practice. Full employment in Britain presented management with difficulties. Amongst these was the danger of a loss of sales from a buoyant market which an industrial dispute could bring; and the impracticality of imposing discipline and inducing effort by means of traditional management methods. Management power might have been further limited by the rise in the general standards of education which appeared to encourage a new critical awareness among manual workers. Human relations ideas, wrote Child (1969b), appeared to offer the best way of maintaining and even extending management control in a new socio-economic environment.

The appeal of human relations ideas to British managers was as great as to their American counterparts. It offered them an edifice of scientifically-acquired evidence to support the view that it was possible to release the innate enthusiasm of groups for co-operation with management through meeting their members' deeply felt needs for belonging. Child felt that in the 1940s a combination of publicly exposed mismanagement, occurring early in the war, provided an impetus for a review of management. Foremanship became an urgent issue for the management movement. The burden had been placed on the foremen and human relations ideas. The stress on social skills, came as an answer to a perceived problem.

Child reported that in the early 1940s, only a minority of personnel officers (let alone managers) had heard about the Hawthorne studies. The "selling" of human relations ideas involved a great deal of propaganda. In 1947, Mayo addressed the Institute of Personnel Management conference. Child argued that the most influential British publication on these famous experiments was the long series of articles by Urwick and Brech which ran in "Industry Illustrated" between November 1944 and July 1946. Being grounded in educational institutions, research and scholarship, when human relations ideas did arrive in Britain, they appeared first in management textbooks. Brown's (1954) *"The Social Psychology of Industry"* was popular amongst

management teachers during the 1950s. Argyle (1972) felt that human relations ideas had their greatest impact on supervisory and management training programmes, even though he felt that it was the personnel rather than the production departments which were most enthusiastic about it in Britain.

Which factors assisted in the transfer and growth of human relations ideas and their associated techniques in Britain? Three main ones can be cited. These were American investment in Britain, the activities of Anglo-American productivity teams, and the development of joint consultation in British industry during this period. Each factor will be examined in turn.

Anglo-American investment in the United Kingdom economy

The investment in the U.K. by U.S. companies can be said to have created a "managerial ideas bridge" across the Atlantic. Dunning (1958) surveyed the importance of U.S. investments in the period 1940-53. He reported that in 1940 these investments were $530 million while by 1955 the value of U.S. direct investment in Britain had reached $941 million. This figure was second only to that invested by America in Canada and represented 57.7% of U.S. manufacturing investment in Europe as a whole. Some 233 companies were operating as branch units of American companies. In 1954 the ten largest U.S.-financed manufacturers in the U.K. were Esso Petroleum, Ford Motor, British United Shoe, Monsanto Chemical, Vacuum Oil, Vauxhall Motor, Kodak, Hoover, Standard Telephone and Cable and Goodyer. Other factories which were branch houses of U.S. corporations included Gillette, National Cash Register, Caterpillar Tractor, Elizabeth Arden and Remington Rand.

Dunning felt that no other period had brought with it such a combination of circumstances so conducive to the expansion of American interests. He listed several reasons to account for this. First, the shortage of dollars in the sterling area which deprived U.S. firms of their pre-war sales outlets and induced them to set up manufacturing units in the U.K. In this way, they could sell their products for sterling. Second, a growing demand in Britain

for U.S. designed and styled goods. Third, the need to develop specific industries also encouraged the growth of post-war American investment in Britain. Finally, U.S. capital had been attracted to those fields in which research and development were of above average significance, and in which the United States had built an important lead during the Second World War.

Dunning (1958) argued that a unique feature of American affiliated companies operating in Britain was their centralization of policy. As a matter of principle, he wrote, both American manufacturing techniques and managerial methods were consciously assimilated and adhered to whenever possible. He reported the very frequent inter-changes of personnel that took place between U.S. and U.K. plants. Special visits were paid by management, production, costing and time-and-motion experts whenever a change of departmental policy in the United States needed to be implemented at U.K. branch level. Writing some years later in the role of a consultant working at Esso-Fawley, Klein (1976) described how in the late 1960s and early 1970s American consulting teams were detailed to Fawley to prescribe and run management training.

The British subsidiaries of U.S. companies were allowed full and easy access to their parents' manufacturing methods and experiences. Top management methods and business philosophy appeared to be the same in British and American plants, wrote Dunning. Branch facilities benefited from the new knowledge and thereby avoided many mistakes and teething problems in spheres such as training, remuneration of labour, office procedures, costing and budgeting control, work study and inventory control. Following Mayo's teaching, attention was also paid to the role of the foreman. In particular to a consideration of their responsibilities, training and their role as the lower strata of management.

The approach and attitude to the key managerial functional areas was looked at through American eyes even though the subsidiary was operating within an alien economic environment. Managing directors had to ensure that their senior plant executives visited their U.S. parent plant frequently to study at first hand the latest management methods being practised.

At the time, human relations topics were important and U.S. practices in areas such as wage payment systems, profit-sharing schemes, bonus payments, non-financial benefits, informing employees about company policy and suggestion schemes were very much to the fore. Dunning noted that in this sphere, UK companies followed parent company practice, particularly in employee selection and training. A number of large subsidiaries operated special local training schools, while senior operatives and staff were sent to America for instruction. Burroughs, 3M and Frigidare all encouraged promising staff to visit their respective parent plants for several months.

Discussing the transfer of "management technology" across the Atlantic, Dunning (1970) noted that first, if a British firm of the time wanted to move in the direction of U.S. management practices, it had plenty of avenues available to do so (e.g. employing consultants, U.S. technical literature, appointing U.K. managers with experience of U.S. companies). Second, U.S. management technology was non-proprietary and general, rather than patented and firm-specific. Third, there was the spin-over phenomenon in which the American companies passed-on both general and system specific technology to their component suppliers. Executives started their own companies and re-created the organizational and managerial structures, processes and systems.

Finally, it can be noted how American ideas were applied in specific industry firms. Through the normal course of labour mobility, contacts with trade and research associations, customers, suppliers, the transmission of this type of knowledge, and the philosophy behind it, were considerable. Thus it was through the American multi-nationals in the Second World War and post war era, that the word about modern management ideas and techniques, which of course included human relations ones, was spread.

Anglo-American Productivity Teams

The second major factor contributing to the transfer of human relations ideas from the United States into Britain were the Anglo-American Productivity Teams. The teams reported in 1951 that the most significant single factor in America which contributed to high productivity at low cost was efficient

management.   Even if Britain could not use American production techniques and processes, British firms could assimilate U.S. managerial practices.

The Anglo-American Council on Productivity had been formed in 1948 to arrange for the exchange of information on such issues as production techniques, industrial organization and managerial efficiency with particular reference to conditions in U.S. and U.K. industries. Between 1949 and 1953 the Council sent 66 teams under the Marshall Plan representing managers, technicians and operators to study the experience of the U.S. in raising productivity and to see if their methods could be applied to British industry.

The suggestions of these productivity missions were picked up by the National Economic Development Office (N.E.D.O.) which, with other bodies such as the Foundation for Management Education, and the British Institute of Management (B.I.M.) suggested the establishment of American university-type business schools which initially used much American based teaching material in the form of case studies and textbooks.   The productivity missions promoted the adoption of what they considered to be the secret ingredients of successful American management. These included "participative" human relations styles of management based on the work of Mayo and the Management-by-Objectives (MbO) system popularized by Drucker (1954).

Joint consultation in Britain

The third major factor contributing to the adoption of human relations ideas in Britain was the move to joint consultation.   Management ideas and their associated techniques are closely related. Indeed, the latter are often a more visible expression of the former.   In seeking to identify the penetration of human relations ideas in Britain, it is sometimes easier to identify the visible manifestation of ideas in their techniques.   One such instance is that of joint consultation councils. These "works councils" as their were more commonly known, reached their height of popularity in Britain during the 1940s and 1950s.

Initially they were known as joint production committees. These groups were strongly encouraged by the government of the day following the wartime Essential Work Orders (1941). Pucky (1962) felt that an incidental but significant consequence of their establishment was that the "theory of the infallibility of management" in Britain was severely shaken. Joint consultation was set up in many industries, particularly armaments in Britain during the Second World War. Their purpose was to obtain greater co-operation from the workers. After the war many firms abandoned them, but they became built into the structures of the nationalised industries in the belief that they would produce a co-operative industrial society leaving collective bargaining to deal with the areas of potential conflict such as wages.

As a technique, these councils had their basis in human relations ideas. They were founded on the belief that individuals would feel better if they were given the opportunity to participate in some way in decisions that affected their jobs or at least be informed about such decisions. Companies wishing to keep their employees satisfied should provide a forum in which they could voice their minor grievances and canvas ideas for improvements. While there might be some issues of contention between employers and workers, they were many more issues of common interest between them.

Joint committees provided the means through which such common ground could be found. There were many matters of administration where the organizing talents of the ordinary employee could find expression which might be denied to him unavoidably in everyday work. If the facility to participate and the forum were provided, employees would feel better about working for the company. This would result in lower absenteeism and turnover rates, less conflict, a greater feeling of loyalty and belonging, and higher morale. Finally, it was believed that joint committees provided a context in which management and workers could meet each other in circumstances in which their superior-subordinate role relationships were played down, and their common roles as employees of the firm, equally concerned with its success, were stressed.

Joint committees therefore represented an attempt by Mayoite managements to create a platform for management-worker discussions. Their purpose was to demonstrate "family spirit" and solidarity with the firm. Their failure was due management's inability to successfully blur its different roles. At one time it was the worker's controller, at the next it was his friend. This changing of hats did not fool the workers who continued to see the need for trade unions.

Hirszowicz (1981) wrote about the growing post-war affluence in Europe during the 1950s and early 1960s. which acted to reduce the desire for participation which had been vociferous in the 1945-51 period. The growing affluence of the Western world in her view, coincided with a marked decrease in working class radicalism. State intervention, the expansion of large corporations and collective bargaining resulted in unions ceasing to press for power-sharing or control. Big business and social democratic governments were more concerned during these years with worker apathy and lack of commitment. However, it did not mean that American ideas were applied wholesale. Most were used with careful modification and tailoring.

One of the best known and best documented examples of joint consultation in Britain during the late 1940s and early 1950s was that used by the Glacier Metal Company. At this company, it was the responsibility of the managers to promote industrial harmony, to play down conflicts and tensions, all in the belief that it would lead to the Mayoite promise of industrial efficiency based upon employees' emotional security and a sense of belonging (Jacques, 1951; Brown and Jacques, 1965). Part of this development came through with Mayoite ideas of group harmony but another part was undoubtedly home grown and re-exported.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PERIOD

Introduction

Although it had its beginnings in the 1940s, the psychological period mainly spanned the three decades between 1950 and 1980. It can be divided broadly into two phases. The main characteristics of each phase are shown in Table 3.3. The highpoint of the psychological period were the 1960s in America. Holloway (1983) wrote that the idealism of the 1960s was part and parcel of a time when affluence left room for more liberal methods of management. Among sections of the industrial community, the consensus model of society and organizations held sway. There was held to be no difference between the interests of the individual and the employer provided that the interpersonal skills of managers could be improved.

Table 3.3:   Aspects of the Psychological Period

Founding fathers	New Disciples
Individuals involved:	
Abraham Maslow	Warren Bennis
Frederick Herzberg	Richard Beckhard
Douglas McGregor	Richard Walton
Rensis Likert	Richard Blake and
Chris Argyris	Jane Mouton
Main contribution:	
philosophy	empirical research
theory	application techniques
Period of main influence:	
1945-65	1965-75

The first phase of the psychological period can be dated as 1945-65. It had its beginnings with the publication of Maslow's seminal article on human motivation (Maslow, 1943). Indeed, many observers consider Maslow's concept of "self-actualization" to be the starting point for the humanistic approach to organizations. Other authors who had books published in this period include Herzberg et al. (1959), McGregor (1960) and Likert (1961).

The founding fathers of the first phase provided the theoretical and philosophical underpinning to a set of therapeutic ideas. Their writings stressed self-awareness, self-knowledge, and self-understanding. They emphasised democracy and humanitarianism. The theme was developed by social psychologists like Kurt Lewin who had fled from European totalitarianism and authoritarianism. These refugees saw in American society, the potential for human fulfilment and democratic involvement of a type that they had previously never envisaged.

As an approach to understanding work behaviour and motivation, the democratic humanist period was distinguished by the way in which more sophisticated psychological assumptions, together with value based predictions, were introduced into management thinking under the banner of a systematic management programme. For example, Lewin's basic assumption was that people needed to be actively involved in decision-making if they were to be fulfilled and effective in following up the decisions made. Although Lewin died in 1947, the tradition that he established was followed by Likert at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Centre. The message was that democracy paid in management.

The second phase of the psychological period stretched from about 1965 until the late 1970s. It emphasized empirical research and the application of results to the solution of individual and organizational problems. This later strand of the democratic-humanitarian movement held that scientific investigation should seek to realise the potential that people possessed. This thread in American thinking flourished in a variety of forms in the warmth and affluence of places such as middle-class California where it first appeared. Watson (1986) commented that it was strange that a creed coming

from this particularly rarefied and often self-indulgent quarter of the intellectual world, should have been taken up so much in the traditionally hard-headed world of management thinking and organizational behaviour.

A number of writers sought to list the key assumptions which underpinned the psychological period. Although there are disagreements, the following represent recurring themes from the literature. First, the belief that reality was that which was experienced subjectively as real. The significance of anything was the effect that it had on the individual psyche. Second, anything that might cause even the most minimal emotional discomfort was held to be illegitimate. Third, human personality was believed to be under constant attack by illegitimate, cruel and savage forces.

Not all of these attacks constituted a trauma threat but less extremely, they placed a constraint upon human performance which, if removed, would permit the personality to emerge in a burst of efficiency and productivity. Fourth, anyone could be as good as anyone else if they have the right training. Any differences in performance were only skill differences and were not held to represent differences in character, talent, personality, fundamental belief systems or values. Finally, in determining the truth or validity of anything, new ideas and techniques were held to be better than old ones. Those ideas consonant with the advanced and politically popular were better than those which were not. Those which might be derived from the prevailing distortion or mis-application of some psychological principle were better than those which were not. If it felt good to practically everybody involved and if nearly everybody endorsed it, then it was good!

Cultural heritage

To understand the background to the development, growth and adoption of neo-human relations ideas and techniques in American organizations during the psychological period, one needs to examine the influential societal factors of the period, particularly those in the 1965-75 period when these ideas became established. A general humanism can be said to have been ascendant in Western culture during the 1960s, especially among middle class

Americans. There was also the impact of the Johnson Administration with its dreams of a Great Society and the social indicators movement which sought to measure the quality of life in America in general.

Perhaps the predominant factor during this period was the dramatic decline in American self-confidence which, during the period in question, fell to a low ebb. Defeat in Vietnam, economic stagnation, the impact of oil price rises, concerns about the impeding exhaustion of natural resources, all produced a mood of pessimism which spread through those in high circles and through society at large. It led people to lose faith in their leaders.

Following the political turmoil of the 1960s, many Americans retreated to purely personal pre-occupations. Unable to effect political changes they opted for psychic self-improvement. Getting in touch with feelings, jogging, learning how to relate, and living for the moment (the "here-and-now"). Elevated to a programme, these activities represented a retreat from politics and a repudiation of, and perhaps a cleansing of the past. The desire was to forget the early sixties, the riots, the New Left, college campus disruptions, Vietnam, Watergate, and the Nixon Presidency. Abbe Hoffman, former leader of the Yippies and Jerry Rubin, looked for alternative experiences in the spiritual supermarkets of the West Coast (Lasch, 1980; Lasch, 1985). Rubin wrote that in the five years between 1971-5 he directly experienced est, gestalt therapy, bioenegetics, rolfing, massage, jogging, health foods, Tai Chi, Esalen, hypnotism, modern dance, meditation, Silva Mind Control, Arica, acupuncture, sex therapy and Reichian therapy.

The period created what Lasch (1980) termed the "culture of narcissism". Additionally, there were aspects of American life itself which fostered and supported such neo-human relations ideas. The freedom from religious superstition left a gap in the lives of many Americans which came to be filled by the creed of self-love. People hungered not for personal salvation but for the feeling, albeit even a momentary one, of personal well being, health and psychic security. The inner revolution which began in the late 1960s, turned into a full force in the early 1970s. It grew out of an awareness amongst many Americans that past radicalism had failed to address itself to the quality of personal life or to questions of culture.

Could this be said to be a widespread cultural trend throughout the United States? Some writers have condemned the psychological or psychic orientation as being the opiate of the upper middle classes. Self-absorption sought to insulate affluent Americans against the horrors around them. The horrors of poverty, racism and injustice. It thereby eased their conscience. Perhaps the "awareness craze" only addressed the problems of the well-to-do while neglecting those of social groups such as the poor? Lasch (1985) believed that the self-awareness movement grew not out of complacency in America, but from desperation and that it was not confined solely to the middle classes.

Social questions came to present themselves as personal ones, and these arose from what he called the warlike conditions which pervaded American society from the dangers and uncertainty that surrounded Americans, and from a loss of confidence in the future (Lasch, 1980). While the poor always lived for the present, said Lasch, a desperate concern for personal survival, sometimes distinguished as hedonism, now engulfed the middle classes as well. Rieff (1987) observed that a sense of well-being had become an end in itself, rather than a by-product of some superior commercial goal.

Demographic factors also played a part in sustaining the growth of neo-human relations ideas in the period. Rosen (1978) described how the human potential movement spoke relentlessly about "self" or "real self", about self-actualization, and the "whole person". Where Freud had found a mortgage that could never be entirely paid off, the neo-human relations movement's ideas hinted at a final freedom and a life back in the black. Back (1972) felt that many of the basic tensions in American society which had sparked off the original interest in psychological issues in society in the mid-1940s had, by the 1960s, increased substantially. He cited specifically the existence of a whole generation which had grown up without seeing either the Depression or economic want. These people now crossed the country in search of excitement and viewed life as having a deeper meaning than either material wealth or scientific understanding gave them.

Lasch (1980) believed that the culture of competitive individualism was retreating during this period. It had carried the logic of individualism to the extreme of a war of all against all. It had promised the pursuit of happiness

which, in its turn, had led to a narcissistic pre-occupation with the self. In this conception, economic man gave way to psychological man. He was the final product of bourgeois individualism. While fiercely competitive in his demand for approval and acclaim, psychological man distrusted competition and associated it with an unbridled urge to destroy. Competitive ideologies came to be distrusted while co-operation and teamwork were extolled.

Institutional framework

The main institutional manifestation of the psychological period in American life came in the form of organizational development (OD) programmes in companies. OD programmes were based upon, and put into practice, the ideas of the neo-human relations movement. OD in the United States was originally promoted as a way of encouraging organizational improvement which met both company needs for efficiency and profitability and at the same time provided the individual employee with the opportunity for personal growth and the meeting of their social needs.

Some OD writers claimed that they did not consider existing organizational structures are permanent, and that they were ready to recommend technical and policy changes. In practice, there was little modification of structures, and the major thrust of OD came to be upon individual and group change. T-groups and teambuilding seminars were the most popular techniques. Interpersonal skills training for managers also came to be heavily influenced by the humanistic developments of the period. In the first phase of the period, the legacy of Mayo and the work of Lewin acted to emphasise a social psychological approach which was focused on teams. In the second phase, in the later 1960s and early 1970s, the orientation shifted to individuals and their search for personal growth.

Amongst the enabling institutional forces of the period was the highly publicized dissatisfaction of the American worker. There was considerable discussion of a "new breed" of worker who had a disdain for authority, was less interested in work for the sake of it, and had more interest in the elements of work design that would make the job more meaningful and

which would add to his self-fulfilment. The affluence of the period appeared to foster a concern with higher level, self-actualization needs to which employers felt impelled to respond.

Writing from a critical perspective, Marglin (1979) argued that the 1960s and the early 1970s were a period in which worker discontent with work organization reached a zenith. Business magazines ran stories with photographs from Chaplin's "Modern Times" film on their covers. Car workers at General Motors went on strike in 1972 complaining not about pay, but about the pace of the assembly line. The U.S. Senate held publicized hearings on "worker alienation" in 1972, and Nixon's Department of Health, Education and Welfare produced a report entitled "Work in America".

The common theme running through these institutional developments was that work was dull, repetitive and meaningless, especially for the younger generation. The solution that was suggested was greater control of the production process by the workers themselves through job enlargement and even job enrichment. Marglin (1979) reported that Denise (a Vice President of Ford Motors at the time) confidentially reported to his fellow executives the astronomical rates of absenteeism, turnover and disciplinary cases. The cause of the problem in his view was too much prosperity. Tight labour markets had obliged the Ford company, and other employers, to take on what they regarded as problem-employees. Given these difficulties, Denise concluded that Ford had to, "... *pay more attention than we have in the past to the kinds of jobs we offer.*" (Marglin, 1979: 478).

Managerial initiatives to humanize work could be seen as a response to the increase in labour costs associated with employee indiscipline born of prosperity. Marglin argued that the evidence of the late 1960s and early 1970s matched that of the post 1973 period. Just as job enrichment and other neo-human relations techniques of work organization had flowered in the expectation of chronically tight labour markets, they had withered away once the pressure was off employers. High and rising unemployment shifted workers' attention away from the quality of work and to the question of just having a job at all.

In response to these industrial concerns, some critics argued that OD consultants offered a *"mishmash of 1960s 'flower power' philosophy, anti-authority notions and half-baked concepts such as caring-and-sharing"*, open-ness and *"letting-it-all-hang-out"* (Rowlandson, 1984). Other commentators felt that neo-human relations ideas offered not a mishmash, but a coherent set of guidelines backed by a set of implementation techniques. While many OD specialists stood for all sorts of humanistic values, some observers felt that businessmen wanted to use OD simply to extract more work from employees but more persuasively.

The mood of the time affected organizations in a number of ways. First, it acted to displace politics as the focus of attention. Collective grievances became transformed into personal problems which were considered to be amenable to therapeutic intervention treatments such as counselling. Second, the popularization of psychological modes of thought and the spread of the "new consciousness" movement added to the quest for spiritual and other panaceas to be used <u>within</u> the workplace. Third, the narcissist possessed many traits that led to success in organizations. For example, the manipulation of interpersonal relationships and the discouragement of the formation of deep personal attachments were valued by the corporation. In its turn, the corporation offered the narcissist the approval that he needed to validate his self-esteem.

Lasch (1980) argued that Whyte's "organizational man" and the loyalty era had given way to Maccoby's (1976) bureaucratic "gamesman". In the age of the executive success game, the narcissist stepped to the forefront. Such men saw the world as mirror of themselves. They had no interest in external events except in as much as they threw back a reflection of their own image. For many people at the time, narcissism represented the best way of coping with the tensions and anxieties of life. The social conditions, wrote Lasch, brought out the narcissistic traits in people.

The sociability of psychological man has already been commented upon. Did the educational and training programmes run under the banner of OD eliminate antagonism and cultivate a "commercial friendliness"? The American cult of friendliness concealed, although did not eradicate, a murderous competition for goods and positions. Assertiveness training

appealed to those who recognized that agility in interpersonal relations determined what appeared on the surface to be achievement. The message was that success depended on psychological manipulation.

The popularization of therapeutic modes of thought, while it may have discredited authority, nevertheless left domination uncriticised. By softening or eliminating the adversarial relationships between subordinates, psychological forms of social control made it more difficult for workers to counter the demands of the organization. The objectives of OD were coloured by these beliefs. OD aimed at creating an open, problem-solving climate in the organization, and supplemented the authority of role and status with that of knowledge and competence. It sought to locate decision-making and problem-solving as close to the information sources as possible. It attempted to build trust and collaboration by increasing self-control and self-direction for people within the organization.

Krell (1981) argued that organizational development began by satisfying the need for companies *to be seen to be* incorporating humanistic values into their processes and structures. While participants on early OD programmes were educated to recognize their needs as persons in the work environment, management's objective for participation was to achieve organizational effectiveness. Companies buying an OD package were free to view it as a productivity improving device. Interpersonal effectiveness (and the associated humanistic values) were accepted as a means towards achieving that goal.

The absence of religious superstition that Lasch (1978) noted, together with the decrease in social bonds of kinship, neighbourhood, church and family networks, meant that many people lacked any form of social support or "normative anchors" which made life tolerable. In their place, argued Ouchi and Johnson (1978), the large work organization came to provide the associational ties and cohesion for its people (echoes of Mayo?). In the view of these authors, American companies should attempt to create a complete inclusion of the employee within the company.

Many of the OD techniques based upon neo-human relations ideas such as the family T-group, team-building and counselling, all reflected the notion of "bringing the family together". Supervisors received training to be aware of all aspects of an employee's life, and companies organized post-work social events (e.g. Friday afternoon "beer-busts"). Corporate values were adjusted to reflect employee needs as well as profits.

What about the institutional framework of the later psychological period? From the early 1970s, the United States began to experience its worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, as well as a political crisis. Zimbalist (1975) claimed that the post-1945 period of almost uninterrupted prosperity in the U.S. economy came to a halt in the late 1960s. Despite the ever-growing share of total U.S. corporate profits attributable to foreign investments (about 32% by 1974) and the higher profit margins abroad, the overall profit rate for these American corporations began falling from 1965 onwards.

This decline was caused by a number of factors. Amongst the major ones were the competition between the U.S. and other advanced nations, notably Japan; the intensifying struggles in the Third World; and the declining productivity gains in the U.S. economy in the post-1965 period, which were lower relative to its major capitalist competitors. American companies' response to these pressures was to introduce labour-saving technology and work intensification and work humanization programmes. Thus OD played a role in providing the "social technology" with which to implement these changes.

Kanter (1985) analysed the 1960-80 period to identify the topics which pre-occupied the American business press in those years. She studied the business periodicals index for the periods 1959-61, 1964-66, 1969-71, 1974-76 and 1979-80. By measuring column inches and citations, she reviewed over 7000 pages of listings and identified 246 separate topics. She found that in the time, a large number of topics remained relatively stable, with business-fads flying through. Kanter summarized her conclusions by saying that, "... *the majority of issues growing in importance concerned human resources ... There was also considerable attention to executive training and management development...*" (Kanter, 1985: 45).

Peaking around 1970 and then virtually disappearing were topics which had a 1960s counter-culture flavour. For example, drug problems in industry, group relations, sensitivity training, labour supply and government ownership. There were also discussions about minority employment and automation. The 1970s saw a decline of interest in traditional management style, management rights, work measurement, work sampling and collective bargaining. Topics that grew in importance during the 1970s were related to the struggle to deal with the pressures of a changing competitive environment. These were employee rights, selection, training, supervision, motivation, and the new management style which emphasised teamwork and participation. In these years, human resource management (HRM) rose to prominence. Compensation, incentives, dismissal, outplacement, resignation and employee counselling became popular. Attention was also focused on training and development and affirmative action. While each of these topics was invented and introduced much earlier, the dates indicate when each became firmly established enough in corporate culture to merit the attention of the business press.

Motivational context

What did the OD techniques, based upon neo-human relations ideas, offer managers? There are two answers to this question - a public and a private one. Let us consider the public one first. NHR-ideas had embedded in them certain values, beliefs and attitudes about the nature of man at work. Throughout the century, the view of human beings as simple machines declined, although the law-boundedness of individual behaviour remained a basic pre-supposition. However, instead of possessing a few law-bounded instincts, individuals came to be seen as driven by a variety of needs. Workers behaved in ways which satisfied their diverse needs. In this context, the manager's job was seen as being to manipulate their behaviour by identifying a specific worker need, and then offering him an incentive in return for work.

Alternatively, the manager could manipulate tasks and environments to influence the creation of new needs, and then to offer need-satisfying incentives. In either case, workers were viewed as being law-bounded and

malleable. By developing skills such as expressing feelings honestly and learning how to listen and empathise, it was believed that such a management style would produce less conflict with subordinates who would thus experience commitment to the organization, would become highly motivated; and would provide more and better work.

This view was very much in tune with the times as described earlier. In this conceptualization, the manager acted in the role of interviewer, attempting to determine what would challenge the worker, and what his or her primary need might be. The manager's role was that of catalyst and facilitator rather than controller. He motivated and delegated subordinates and gave them as much responsibility as he felt they could handle.

In this model, authority shifted from the office or the position- holder, onto the task itself. Managers became the agents through whom task requirements were communicated. If the worker responded to the challenge and was capable of self-discipline (Theory Y), he would see to it himself that the task was adequately performed. Motivation changed from being extrinsic to intrinsic. The organization provided the opportunity for the employees' existing motivation to be harnessed to organizational goals. The involvement of the worker, in Etzioni's terms, became moral.

In contrast, the private explanation was that many managers saw in OD a way of improving productivity and profitability. Being the customer who paid the bill, the managers were quite capable of dispensing with the more egalitarian and more humanistic aspects of the OD package with which they did not agree. They had done this years earlier by selecting those aspects of scientific management which they had wanted, while rejecting the others. Beer and Walton (1987) commented that the application of OD by managers rather than by OD consultants had grown and that the OD consultant supported changes initiated by general managers. Friedlander and Brown (1974) commented that OD ran the risk of encouraging and implementing subtle but pervasive forms of exploitation, curtailment of freedom, control of personality, violation of dignity and intrusion of privacy. All of this would be done in the name of science and of economic and technological efficiency.

They wrote that, in the hierarchical fabric of everyday organizational power struggles, OD researcher/consultants typically represented the control needs of management.

While this may have motivated the management of a company to introduce NHR-ideas, one can ask what appeal, if any, the ideas had for workers. Most workers, of course, had no choice in the matter. Some undoubtedly would have looked on cynically as their successors would do ten years later, upon quality circles. However, it is known that many did participate enthusiastically since OD was not only sustained but also flourished in the United States. Harvey (1974: 24-5) felt that OD represented a religious movement which addressed, *"deep feelings of discontent, alienation and loneliness which are met neither by religious institutions, nor other organizations of which we are a part."*

Harvey cited the mechanical ceremonies of OD which were entered into without a sense of purpose. In his view, these were unrelated to the organizational problems at hand. Amongst the rituals he listed were teambuilding, inter-group sensing, conflict resolution, life planning, T-groups, confrontation meetings, survey research and data collection. He then went on to consider other parallels that OD had with religion such as its liturgy, revival meetings, its messianic approach, and how it dealt with the "burnout" amongst its priest-consultants. Forrest (1984) referred to the neo-human relations development priesthood or the "lumpen-intelligensia" who use psychology as the basis for a secular religion of behaviour which acted to legitimate specious training, and which established political and intellectual hegemony for some at the expense of others.

The appeal to those involved came, not least, from the Hawthorne effect itself. The mere involvement of people in OD activities showed that management was paying attention to them. The fact that OD programmes were new and different generated interest in them, irrespective of their focus or content. The underlying values of OD suggested that everybody in the organization had something useful to contribute to the effort, had an opinion worthy of respect, and thereby should be able to affect work. The parallels with the quality circle programmes of the 1980s are striking.

Transfer of neo-human relations ideas to Britain

The American NHR-ideas that did come to Britain arrived in the form of OD techniques. Mant's (1986) view was that OD was just another package that American could sell the "gullible Brits". One can say that the influence of these ideas has been minimal. However, one should qualify this by distinguishing between, on the one hand, people-oriented OD techniques such as confrontation meetings and T-groups and, on the other, technological-structural techniques such as job enlargement and job enrichment. While being based upon the same set of neo-human relations ideas, the people-oriented techniques were generally rejected in Britain at both the discussion and implementation levels. The technological-structural techniques in contrast, were discussed even though they may not have been widely implemented in the factories.

Why then were neo-human relations ideas less acceptable to the British than their predecessors? One can examine this question first from the point of view of two American academics and then from that of two British academics. Two American professors, Dubin (1970) and then Steele (1977) separately reported the characteristics which they saw in British managers which differentiated them from American ones. There was a high degree of overlap in their conclusions, and these may identify the obstacles to the transfer of certain neo-human relations based techniques into Britain.

Dubin and Steele believed that differences in attitudes to perfectibility, class and personal trust were central. Perfectibility referred to the belief of American managers that current ways of doing things would eventually be replaced by better ones. They were optimists who considered that the future held promise. In contrast, British managers, they claimed, valued security, reflected in the observation that they must be doing alright if they were still in business. They were pessimists, aware of the costs of change, and required proof that something would work before it was adopted. Since such proof could only be supplied after the change, innovations were more likely to be introduced in the U.S. than in Britain.

The second distinguishing feature noted by these authors was the effect of class. Specifically, the predominantly middle class British managers placed great weight on people having a "proper" education. Proper was defined more in terms of where one studied than what one studied. Additionally, in the U.K., there was less awareness of a pool of lower level organizational people capable of being developed into successful managers. These individuals were neglected on class grounds since they did not fit social requirements.

Finally, these writers noted the role of personal trust. British managers' primary criterion for valuing their subordinates appeared to be trust and personal loyalty. This was defined as them "doing the right thing" and being "sound", especially in the absence of the boss. Trust acted as a pressure to conform in thought and action. Trustworthy employees rarely surprised their supervisors with innovative actions since this would be considered unsound. There was less of this in the United States because of the greater emphasis upon universalistic criteria for selection and evaluation claimed Dubin and Steele. These criteria were more independent of the particular opinions of the present boss and stressed instead operational and financial achievement. Such universal criteria were necessary because of the greater frequency of job changes at all levels in U.S. companies.

Another pair of academics, this time writing from Britain, Cox and Cooper (1985) also felt that the U.K. was hostile to O.D. techniques. They argued that until the 1970s, management ideas had flowed unhindered across the Atlantic from America to Britain. They quoted Haire, Ghiselli and Porter (1966), Steele (1977) and Greiner (1977) to support their contention that cultural differences between the United States and Europe at the time, prevented the creation of a context for the establishment of the American concept of O.D. in Europe in general, and within Britain in particular. The British cultural heritage, institutional framework and motivational context were all hostile to the adoption of O.D. Cooper and Cox (1985) identified a number of key cultural differences of the period. These are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4:   Contrasts between Europe and the United States

Dimension	Europe	United States
Social science tradition	Cognitive Psychoanalytic	Behaviourist Humanist
Model of management	Cognitively complex Behaviourist	Action oriented
Belief in tradition	Tradition valued- change regarded with suspicion	Change seen as positive
Suspicion of things	Suspicious and strongly influenced by own culture	Many cultural influences
Political orientation versus open-ness	Political values	More open values
Class structure	Strong class structure	More classless
Economic situation	Pessimistic	Optimistic

A closer consideration of the British and American situation at the time is necessary. There were differences in the nature of the demands being placed upon the two countries. While Britain was recovering from the war, the United States focused on the post-war needs of its industry to increase productivity in an expanding economy. The 1960s in Britain represented the first decade when affluence returned to a country ravaged by war. The

forties and fifties had been years of hunger, ration cards, cold, re-construction and re-conciliation. By the 1960s, Britain had not only begun to re-establish itself but was also enjoying world prestige. These were the years of the "Swinging Sixties", the Beatles and Carnaby Street. Misquoted and out of context, Harold Macmillan's phrase that Britain had, *"never had it so good"* seemed to sum up the attitudes of the day.

The war had created a huge domestic market which was hungry for goods which had not previously been available. Confidence and optimism characterised society and not guilt or self-doubt. At the institutional level, Macmillan's government was succeeded by two Labour administrations under Harold Wilson. In his terms, the white heat of technology would drive Britain forward.

British business remained unconvinced about the value of formal management education (Thomas, 1980). The first British business schools were not established until the mid-1960s. British businessmen were even more suspicious of any in-company, "touchy-feely" programmes run by OD consultants. In the U.K. the people-oriented technique of the T-group came to represent OD and indeed became synonymous with it. Its excesses provided regular copy for business magazines which fed the prejudices of their management readers (Rowlandson, 1984).

The fragmentation of labour in mass production helped to provide health and prosperity to the shattered nations of Europe. It led to the creation of meaningless tasks which reduced workers to "happy robots". In the late 1960s and early 1970s in Britain, the labour problems, shift in production, and changes in markets, necessitated greater flexibility with an emphasis on quality and reliability. The apparent problem of technocracy and Taylorite strategies reflected in organizational rigidity and inflexibility; expansion of organizational complexity to handle fragmented work; the under-utilization of worker initiative; and the numerous indications of work dissatisfaction. How was this problem to be addressed?

Mills (1978) observed that Europe, with the exception of Britain, went down the industrial democracy route because of government involvement which reflected itself in the more formal and legalistic approach. In contrast, U.S.

pragmatism let management -union co-operation develop voluntarily with a concern for individual worker involvement in day-to-day decision-making. The greater involvement of European workers expressed through worker councils in countries such as West Germany and Sweden, reflected the new political climate of the time. In E.C. countries, the principles of industrial democracy were integrated into the mainstream of industrial policy in the community's states in June 1970. This provided for a separation of management functions from those of supervision and control, and declared that worker representatives should constitute a third of the members on supervisory boards. The fifth directive of the E.C. Commission issued in September 1972, proposed the introduction of co-determination in all member countries over a ten year period.

For ideological and operational reasons British management sought to avoid industrial democracy, especially of worker directors. Experiences in the British Steel Corporation and the Post Office were not in management's view successful. The general lack of confidence in the benefits of worker directors was reflected in the failure to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry on Industrial Democracy (Bullock, 1977).

Reviewing this period, Buchanan (1985) argued that until the late 1970s, the main problem which management was grappling with was the cost of low productivity. This was the period of post-war economic growth. Management was concerned with employee turnover, absenteeism, lateness and sabotage. Their preferred solution led them down the path of job-redesign. Hence in Britain, the key neo-human relations ideas which were discussed in those times were those of Herzberg and the techniques of job enlargement and job enrichment. It was believed that these offered simple ways of reducing costs. Buchanan cited the influence of humanistic psychology as contributing to the refinement of work strategies towards autonomous work groups.

As the costs of absenteeism and turnover were recognized, so interest in job design rose, coming to the fore in Britain during the early 1970s. Earlier, during the 1960s, companies such as Volvo, Saab-Scania and Norsk Hydro, as well as Philips and Fiat, had inaugurated programmes of work redesign. The evidence of British interest was shown by the Department of Employment's

commissioned review of the field (Wilson, 1973) and the formation in 1973 of the Tripartite Steering Group on Job Satisfaction, which included representatives from the Government, CBI and TUC. The outcome was a visit to Sweden and Norway, and the establishment of a Work Research Unit within the Department of Employment.

However, investigations of both British and American evidence (Kelly, 1982; Jenkins, 1983) of studies claiming to show impressive results from job redesign led to questions being asked. Reviewers noted the tendency to report only positive results; the acceptance of management assessment of success rather than use of objective measures (Guest, Williams and Dewe, 1980); the failure to allow for the "novelty effect" of the programme amongst employees; the reduction in performance as one plant of a company learned that re-design was not to be introduced on its site; and the failure to isolate the effect of job redesign from the many other changes that were simultaneously taking place.

The influence of job design did look superficially impressive. While work humanization was supported at the public policy level by several European government's including Britain's, Wall (1982) suggested that its impact on the shopfloor was much less significant. In the cases he has studied, many programmes had not progressed beyond the experimental stage; they were often discontinued after a short period; and the implementation of only cosmetic changes accompanied the claim that far-reaching job enrichment was being implemented. Child (1984: 43) wrote that:

> *"The scale and scope of the experiments in job re-design and work restructuring remain extremely limited. There are many minor developments masquerading under the label of job enrichment, but there are possibly no more than a 100 or so European schemes that really enrich jobs significantly."*

Interest continued in Britain through the 1970s but waned at the end of the decade as rising unemployment increased concern about any kind of working life, regardless of its quality. There was a widespread belief in Britain

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during the 1970s that improving the quality of working life was an appropriate goal for an affluent, educated industrial society. That belief faded in the face of a worsening economic climate and was never popular with British managers anyway. The concern of management refocused itself on resisting industrial democracy. That resistance was successful, and many managers today regard autonomous work groups and job enrichment as quaint relics of a past decade.

ENTREPRENEURIAL PERIOD

In both in the United States and in Britain, the 1980s represented a watershed in business culture. The new culture, it will be argued, provided a fertile ground in which a diverse range of management ideas could flourish. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, a recurring theme of the popular ideas of this period was the notion that the purpose of businesses was to compete with each other for the favours of the customer who was king.

A series of articles during 1986 in the Financial Times (Lorenz,1986; Dixon, 1986; Dodsworth, 1986; Done, 1986; Rapoport, 1986) sought to describe, and to some extent explain, the rise of the management gurus such as consultant-writers such as Tom Peters, Kenneth Blanchard, Edward de Bono; academic consultants such as Henry Mintzberg, Rosabeth Moss Kanter and Michael Porter; and successful businessmen or hero-managers such as Lee Iacocca, Victor Kiam and Jan Carlzon.

It is still too early to judge whether their ideas will stand the test of time, and become incorporated into standard management textbooks and management practice. Indeed the only objective guide that one has to the popular appeal of these authors and their ideas is the somewhat crude market one of how many books they have sold and how much people are willing to pay to hear them speak at conferences and on in-company seminars.

Books however can be a good barometer of attitudes. In this section, the focus will be on the pro-business period of the 1980s. In this period, business books have been more successful than at any time in the past (Freeman, 1985: 347). Why should this have been? Some evidence emerged from the themes of past bestsellers and the cultural context in which they were written. One can contrast this with the anti-business period of earlier decades. The popular classics of the past were generally critical of business and management. Their bite of satire and pessimism was in tune with their particular times. The *Organizational Man* (Whyte 1956) accused business of promoting deadening conformity; *Parkinson's Law* (Parkinson, 1957) scoffed dryly at organizational inefficiency; the *Peter Principle's* (Peter and Hull, 1970) critique of the executive ranks fitted the anti-business temper; *Up the Organization* (Townsend, 1971) with its pithy notions of how to run a business challenged the status quo. However, the analysis in this section will take a broader and more historical perspective, and will examine the socio-political and economic issues of the 1980s.

In the United States, Dodsworth (1986) argued, the early 1980s were an ebulliently materialistic period during which the United States began to slide into soul-searching about Vietnam and other social concerns. The late 1960s and 1970s had seen Americans concerning themselves with a narcissistic pre-occupation as described in the previous section. The turning point, according to Dodsworth, occurred in 1981, the year that the United States turned into recession. In the preceding four or five years, the country had been riding the crest of an inflationary wave, and was only then brought face to face with its own vulnerability, in the face of rising imports of Japanese goods.

Forrest (1984) wrote that the American character derived from two fundamental themes. First there was the religiosity of the American consciousness and second, the belief in the power of human effort to bend the world to human purpose. This ability to create the technology that created the world was reinforced by NASA's success in putting a man on the moon in 1969. Americans ordered their place in the world around the idea that their natures had been forged out of experiences which gave them a special capacity to absorb adversity, and mould out of it a transient good

future. No matter what, the American could tough it out! It was Napoleon Hill (1966), one of the founders of the "positive thinking" movement, who pointed out in the 1930s that the word American ended in I CAN!

The reaction to quality circles, introduced by J. Edwards Deming into Japan in the 1950s represented, in microcosm, the American character in action. Their appeal on being re-imported into the United States in the 1980s lay in the fact that they answered the basic themes in the American consciousness. Quality circles promised redemption from the sin of having fallen from competitive grace in international markets. The act of adoption confirmed that Americans were good and moral people. By providing them with an absolutely elaborate technology of analysis, the circles approach allowed them to operate through a modality in which they still believed was related to their special talents. This was the U.S. faith in technology.

Quality circles also resonated exquisitely with the trendier themes in U.S. life. The circle of well-meaning people sitting around applauding each others' efforts provided their participants with feelings of potency and effect. For most of the century Americans felt themselves to have been the masters of technology and of themselves. It was therefore a shock for them to discover that the Japanese, a nation with half their population, had overcome both conventional and nuclear war, and had applied technology so creatively and efficiently that it was able to challenge the United States. What was perhaps even more shocking, was the realization that the Japanese might be better than the U.S. in the ways that Americans admired most, and in which they felt they had a virtual monopoly.

The Japanese-American comparison of performance (to the detriment of the latter) was brought to the attention of U.S. businessmen by Ouchi (1981) and by Pascale and Athos (1982). Both these works spoke admiringly of Japanese methods, analysed the culture of Japanese companies, and suggested that the U.S. could learn a great deal from Japan. While neither of these books attained blockbuster status, they did sell steadily, and might be said to have sown the seeds for the American riposte and the growth of the entrepreneurial period (Freeman, 1985). Let us now examine some critical factors influencing the entrepreneurial period in the United States.

<u>Cultural heritage</u>

This can be considered under three main sub-headings, the return of American optimism; the possibility of internal transformation; and media influence on business matters.

1.   Return of American optimism

During the early 1980s, the American mood had begun to be very bullish, with a strong sense of entrepreneurial pride. Davies (1988) reported a survey conducted by the Rolling Stone magazine among America's baby boomers born since the Second World War. The survey reported that this generation saw few heroes in the world of 1988. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, who had been assassinated twenty years earlier, were the most admired figures. President Regan was admired by 25% of those interviewed who saw him as a confident and optimistic leader who dwelt on the nation's strength and virtue, rather than upon its disgrace and failure. At the start of the 1980s, American's had elected this man to the Presidency. He emphasised competition, individualism and the "survival of the fittest".

Reviewing the Regan presidency, Business Week (1988) commented that Regan gave the nation just what it needed for much of the 1980s. This was a return to stability and optimism, and a respite from emotional turmoil and incessant change that had pervaded the country since the early 1960s. By the end of the Regan tenure, U.S. foreign policy finally shook off the self-doubt left by Vietnam. He reminded Americans that they had much to feel good about. He chose to fight and win easy battles such as in Grenada and the Gulf of Sidera. Regan's 'economics of joy' as the magazine described them, were able to succeed where Carter's dismal message of malaise had failed. As a result, the United States experienced its longest peacetime expansion.

Jon Steers, Regan's former campaign advisor pointed out after the 1984 election that, *"Regan has given us one thing the people will cling to regardless of future problems. He has presided over the restoration of our confidence. Blindly optimistic, fiercely patriotic, and unbending in his loyalty, he is the*

embodiment of a particular American virtue that says all things are possible, if
you will just make them so - that reality is an illusion that came be overcome."
Regan's own words reflect these point:

> *"They say the U.S. has had its day in the sun; that our nation has*
> *passed its zenith. They expect you to tell your children ... that the*
> *future will be one of sacrifice and few opportunities. My fellow*
> *Americans, I utterly reject that view."*

> Ronald Regan, July 17, 1980

With its back to the wall, battered by competition and criticised for its inadequacy, America swung back onto the attack from the early 1980s. Peters and Waterman's book *"In Search of Excellence"* (ISOE) carried the banner for that attack:

> *"In Search of Excellence touched a chord that ran through the*
> *collective consciousness of the country in the early '80s. The*
> *national hunger for excellence. President Regan talked about*
> *bringing excellence back, reports on the schools spoke of a lack of*
> *excellence, and excellence was the theme of ads countering*
> *Japanese competition. Like wonder ISOE took off as a national*
> *best seller. It was "the answer", surely we could regain our national*
> *position as the pre-eminent producer of goods for the world ...*
> *ISOE just fed the ever present yearning for good news."*

> Godfrey (1985: 3)

The book said that there was good news from America. That good management practice was not resident solely in Japan. This was the message that America wanted to hear. When ISOE was published in 1982, its timing could not have been better. The American management

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techniques that had seemed so invincible in the 1950s and 1960s appeared to have lost their impact. Eyes were turning instead to the omnipotent Japanese. ISOE dispelled that pessimism about America's ability to compete. It offered new models of good management right in America's own backyard. Americans, by nature, like to think that they can solve their own problems. The book's message that U.S. companies could motivate workers and serve customers just as well as the Japanese made it the best selling business book at the time.

Both Freeman (1985) and Pierce and Newstrom (1988) suggested a number of additional reasons to account for the popularity of the guru ideas of the time. They argued that the 1980s were a decade in which Corporate America was back in good standing. Pride and hope re-emerged in the business community. It seemed that the time was ripe for a positive vision of business. The business gurus who came along, by chance or design, articulated this vision in a digestible way. After the anti-business era of the late 1960s and early 1970s, after the recession-shocked later 1970s, after being bullied by Japanophiles, after a decade of finger-pointing by management experts, managers were ready for a positive message and simple answers. They were primed to soak up the gospel of made-in-America excellence.

These new epistles to managers shimmered with optimism. They were enthusiastic about the business world. These authors often eschewed the syntax of reservation and qualification, which was common to academic prose. The message was that Corporate America was back in good standing with the public. There was a resurgence of pride and hope in the business community, and the buying public was reception to business books (Freeman, 1985). Books such as those of Iacocca (1985) expressed confidence in the American business system. They offered reassurance and optimism at a time when U.S. companies had gone through a period of self-doubt and painful re-construction. Naisbitt emphasised the transition towards an informational society and an entrepreneurial economy. He concluded with a rousing exhortation to the old American go-getting frontier spirit:

"We have extraordinary leverage and influence - individually, professionally and institutionally- if we can only get a clear sense, a clear conception, a clear vision, of the road ahead. My God, what a fantastic time to be alive."

Naisbitt (1982)

Each book contained different attractive features. Iacocca's appeal was its heroic quality recounting the Fairy Tale story of a man rising from humble origins to mount a successful industrial rescue. The theme of American Champions which was contained in ISOE, runs through much of the guru literature. It had a double appeal. At one level it elevated a successful businessman like Iacocca into a role model, and in so doing, it aggressively re-asserted the values of American entrepreneurship and individuality which, in many people's eyes, was the ultimate success fantasy. At another level, the guru books, which were written in a determiningly, unswearing optimistic style, reflected an attitude of change to an era of re-assertiveness within the American corporate sector. Management ideas and techniques such as quality circles and corporate culture flourished,

"... at a time when business and business ideas are the subject of mass entertainment on a scale not known in the U.S. since before the Depression."

Thackray (1986: 114)

The enterprise culture also affected business school students. Having emerged from the Vietnam era and the concerns of that period, they found that money making was suddenly in vogue again. Commentators like Raphael Sogalyn noted that, *"The period of introversion had given way to a new era of greed and avarice"*, while Adam Smith (1989), in his book, *"The Roaring 80s"* wrote that:

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"There are times when getting and spending are very important, and times when public purposes surpasses private interest as the accepted goal ... The Reagan years will be remembered as money-value years ... It is not only okay to be rich; it is okay to flaunt it ..."

The high-point of the period was perhaps encapsulated by the phrase, spoken by character, Gordon Gekko, in the film "Wall Street" that "Greed is good". The revival of the money-making ethic established the conditions for the boom in business book and the popularity of their authors.

2.   Possibility of internal transformation

A second influence underlying many of the management ideas promulgated at the time was the notion that a company could become competitive merely by setting its own house in order.   That is, it was the master of its own destiny.   Authors differed as to how this improvement might be achieved. Nevertheless, a focus on the individual's behaviour inside the firm implicitly assumed that if people were induced to develop their own enterprise, commitment and teamwork, there were no limits to what the company could achieve in terms of growth, profit and market share.

These suggestions only made sense, however, when markets were expanding. ISOE was written during a period of recession and became a best seller just as the Regan economic era was starting.   The same is true for the craze for the entrepreneur.   The economic status that he occupied was due mostly to macro-economic reasons. These included American demographics (a bulge of new entrants when the large companies had stopped hiring); industrial upheaval (the the burst of growth in electronics, deregulation, and the first serious opening of the American economy to world markets); the failure of American industrial productivity (which depressed average income per head and caused a revolution in the service economy with 15-20 million new jobs). It became fashionable to be rich and to prove that you could succeed in business.   This enthusiasm filtered abroad, and was picked up in Britain

where starting your own business offered an alternative to being unemployed. The impact of these changes, first in the U.S. and then the U.K. has been felt and has now passed.

3. Media influence on business matters

The effect of the media should also be considered. Perhaps for the first time in this period, financial and economic matters came to be reported as a matter of course. Some commentators have argued that the media and the large corporations colluded in a strategy to gain publicity for themselves and their managers. Thackray (1987) wrote about a, "... *credulous media hungry for heroes [which] is more than happy to accept canned realities and pretensions - at least until the bubble bursts."* The collusion from the companies, said Thackray, came from their addiction to publicity which sought to take advantage of a business press which was less than critical of the shortcomings of business.

During the 1980s, one found the media puffing up executive egos and rushing into hyperbole. An entire media machine developed to support business. This had previously restricted itself to television, film and sports personalities (Rein, Kotler and Stoller, 1987). The age of the entrepreneurial man was the age of the business celebrity. Steve Jobs, Jack Welch and Lee Iacocca attained the status of film stars. Galbraith (1983) commented on the modern phenomenon of the synthetic or created personality. Personality was held to be more interesting than organization. It appealed to reporters, television commentators and others who dealt with the exercise of power and who associated it with the walking speaking individual. As a highly practical matter, people could give interviews and appear on television while organizations could not.

The tremendous growth in the circulation figures of the business press and its hunger for content created a temptation for corporations to lower their standards and to take the low road of the cult of personality and the simplification of ideas and processes. Galbraith wrote that:

"Personality traits are attributed to the heads of the organizations that seem appropriate to the power exercised, and this imagery is assiduously and professionally cultivated. It is the principle purpose of much public relations effort ... presidents of corporations are examples of extensively synthesised personalities; journalists and commentators of the more vulnerable sort are persuaded of their unique personal qualities, as are the subjects themselves ... Divorced from organization, the synthetic personality dissolves and the individual behind it disappears into the innocuous obscurity from which his real personality intended him."

Galbraith (1983)

In the entrepreneurial period, the corporations were inclined to overlook the synthetic and to portray large and complex organizations as extensions of the leader's ego. Roger Smith did not just represent General Motors, he was portrayed as fighting its bureaucracy. IBM was portrayed as invulnerable. The decline and departure of the entrepreneurial heroes of the 1980s such as Steven Jobs (Apple Computer) and Donald Burr (People Express) in the United States, and Clive Sinclair (Sinclair Computers) and Freddie Laker (Skytrain) signalled a return to business as usual. That is, to competition between oligolopies. The entrepreneurial search was redirected inwards in the form of in-company innovation or *intrapreneurship* (Pinchot, 1985).

Institutional factors

In seeking to explain the appeal of guru ideas, attention is now turned to the institutional level. There are six main factors that can be briefly highlighted to explain the appeal to companies of the ideas of this period. These are the changing corporate environment; corporate social responsibility trends; the search for competitive advantage, the influence of fashions about "models of excellent companies"; the failure of personnel management; the decline of trade union pressure; the effect of U.S. government legislation on work organization; and the effects of new technology in requiring more educated employees. Each of these will be mentioned briefly.

1.   Changing corporate environment

Heller (1990) commented upon the shift of the centre of gravity during this business period away from manufacture towards service, away from supplier towards customer, away from brawn and towards brain.   This occurred against a background of a rapidly changing market environment. The move away from producer-control was facilitated by new technology, deregulation, liberalization, and the disappearing frontiers between nations. Old monopolies were destroyed by an abundance of supply and money.

Kanter (1985) noted the changed corporate environment of 1980s.   New models emerged which were reflected in critical management tasks and the context in which people did their work.   The infallibility of management and the certainty of management tasks had declined. The perceived potential of the rest of the workforce to contribute to the solution of organizational problems had increased.   The theme was that, regardless of organizational level, management had to take other people into account.   This included shopfloor workers, customers and suppliers.   The employee - involving strategies of the 1980s, such as quality circles, industrial citizenship programmes and intrapreneurship fitted in well with these organizational change strategies, and allowed the consultant and academic gurus to purvey their wares.

2.   Corporate social responsibility

In the United States in 1981, the Business Roundtable issued a statement of corporate responsibility declaring that the managers of corporations were expected to serve the public interest as well as private profit.   Four "constituencies" were identified - customers, employees, communities and society at large, and shareholders.   This politicization meant that the management of critical boundary spanning issues became a key role of the chief executive, and the amount of time devoted to this grew significantly. Companies placed an increased premium on people adept at handing corporate relations with the public and government.   Like politicians, ambitious executives campaigning for higher office, had to project a

vote-getting image. This gave the green light for the CEO who "fronted" the company, and gave him the opportunity and visibility to become a hero-manager.

3. Failure of personnel management

Guest (1987) argued that, in the eyes of senior management, personnel management had failed to secure the potential benefits of the effective management of people. The major recession which affected the U.S.A. and Western Europe in the 1980s resulted in a run-down in manufacturing and consequent unemployment. The question was what contribution could personnel management make to this. Powerless when external economic forces put the survival of the business at stake, this function was seen as an overhead. In the 1980s, articles in personnel journals justified the relevance of personnel management work. The decline in the numbers of personnel staff represented, in the view of ACAS (1982), a change of philosophy which stressed returning as much responsibility as possible to line managers for personnel matters.

The reasons for this can be found in the influences on the development of personnel management, the role of personnel managers within the organization (Legge, 1978; Beer et al., 1985; Guest and Horwood, 1980) and the prevailing ethos of the time. The political philosophy stressed competition (and implied conflict). By contrast, the personnel tradition of the past and many personnel policies of the time, were founded on a welfare ethos stressing the principles of fairness, and standardization of treatment for specific groups. This was underpinned by collective bargaining which sustained such principles.

In Tyson and Fell's (1986) view, the individualistic philosophy of personnel management (which stressed human resource management) questioned the need for old-type personnel specialists. It was felt that a new approach was needed which established the management of human resources as a mainstream management activity. Human resource management, it was held, was too important to be to be left to the marginally located personnel

managers. Commentators argued that the emphasis on excellence sought to shore up an establishment threatened by a wide variety of insistent and untidy democratic demands for participation.

4.   Decline in union power

Both in the United States and in the United Kingdom, the changed political and economic climate resulted in a reduction of union pressure on management. As a consequence, attention has turned away from collective and adversarial issues of traditional human relations, and towards individual, co-operative questions of the type that concerned employee relations and human resource management. Trends within the trade unions have reinforced such changes. The growth of organized labour in the 1980s was among the white collar, especially public sector employees.

Knowledgeable and educated, they were concerned about close supervision and wanted to be left alone to manage their work. This interest led to the bringing of Quality of Working Life demands to the bargaining table. They pushed for flexitime and joint management-labour committees. Many important interest groups converged in their acceptance of more participation at the shopfloor level (Beaumont, 1985). That original concern by this group has percolated down to shopfloor employees. These ideas were instituted in new work arrangement at Nissan's plant in Tyne and Wear.

5.   Search for competitive advantage

Many companies felt that the way they could achieve a competitive advantage was to seek improvements in the management of people and organizational structures. The emphasis was upon the better utilization of their human resources (Beer et al, 1985; Tichy, Fombrun and Devanna, 1982). The models of excellence which were presented were influential. The stereotyped Japanese companies, and the U.S. excellent companies identified by Peters and Waterman (1982) and Kanter (1985) all practised human resource management. The conclusion reached was that effective human resource management was what excellent companies did. Kanter

(1985) noted that fad and fashion played a role in extending more participative work systems. Organizations could be just as fashion conscious as individual consumers. When a few leading ones started to adopt reform, the rest often quickly followed because they wanted to be seen to be modern as well. In her view, concerns about image were a driving force for executives in the new, more political and more public corporate environment.

6. Government legislation

Other innovations and reforms permitted time flexibility and schedule control (Guest, 1987). In the United States, federal government and state court decisions since the 1970s supported new employee rights, for example, to privacy, conscientious objection and dismissal.

Motivational context

The final issue to consider is what attracted managers to these ideas as witnessed by book sales, conference attendances and consulting fees. Kanter (1985) reported that, as a result of the changes taking place in the U.S. economy in the early 1980s, managers felt dislocated and disoriented. They had lost both the a sense of supremacy and the sense of control. They found this unsettling, frightening, frustrating and intolerable. They felt at the mercy of change in a world marked by turbulence, uncertainty and instability. Their comfort and success was dependent on those whom they could hardly influence.

For middle managers, the 1980s created changed times and new environments which exerted new pressures that required new insights, skills, orientations and roles. Pressures on their careers from trends in the labour market, declining productivity and foreign competition, all increased career insecurity. The job-holding of women in the United States increased the competition for lower management jobs. Increased schooling led to increased ambitions and a large pool of competition.

Inter-departmental power, as well as individual power were at stake. Individuals competed with one another inside of the company. They sought to improve their unit's bargaining position within the organization. Scarcities increased internal bargaining for resources which affected the daily quality of life, as well as the ability to produce accomplishments that produced net career advantage. Turbulent environments kept shifting the focus of relevance and made whole functions or departments relatively essential or unessential depending on their control over critical issues, as these themselves shifted.

Changes bring opportunities. They allow enterprising consultants to offer change management products and services, thereby turning other people's confusion into profitable business. In such circumstances, the market was receptive to ideas and techniques that might "save the American corporation" or to "meet the Japanese challenge". The disruptions of the period created the development of social and organizational techniques for increasing productivity and motivation. Peters (1988) implied that chaos could be managed by the application of 45 prescriptions (See Table 3.4).

Many of the management techniques played a part in this battle for company attention and resources. Management-by-objectives (MbO) had, in the past, strengthened the position of line management; quality management emphasised the role of production departments; while corporate culture raised the visibility of human resource departments. These techniques affect the opportunity structure in a company. They signal which career paths are likely to be significant and which functions would be included in dominant coalitions. Second, they affect the power structure by determining who will have access to resources and information.

Table 3.5: **Tom Peters' Prescriptions for a "World Turned Upside Down"** (Peters, 1988)

Creating Total Customer Responsiveness

The Guiding Premise	C-1: Specialize/Create Niches/Differentiate
The Five Basic Value-Adding Strategies	C-2: Provide Top Quality, as Perceived by the Customer
	C-3: Provide Superior Service/Emphasize the Intangibles
	C-4: Achieve Extraordinary Responsiveness
	C-5: Be an Internationalist
	C-6: Create Uniqueness
The Four Capability Building Blocks	C-7: Become Obsessed with Listening
	C-8: Turn Manufacturing into a Marketing Weapon
	C-9: Make Sales and Service Forces into Heroes
	I-1–I-10: Pursue Fast-Paced Innovation (see below)
The Evolving Firm	C-10: Launch a Customer Revolution

Pursuing Fast-Paced Innovation

The Guiding Premise	I-1: Invest in Applications-Oriented Small Starts
The Four Key Strategies	I-2: Pursue Team Product/Service Development
	I-3: Encourage Pilots of Everything
	I-4: Practice "Creative Swiping"
	I-5: Make Word-of-Mouth Marketing Systematic
Management Tactics to Encourage Innovation	I-6: Support Committed Champions
	I-7: "Model" Innovation/Practice Purposeful Impatience
	I-8: Support Fast Failures
	I-9: Set Quantitative Innovation Goals
The New Look Firm	I-10: Create a Corporate Capacity for Innovation

Achieving Flexibility by Empowering People

The Guiding Premises	P-1: Involve Everyone in Everything
	P-2: Use Self-Managing Teams
The Five Supports (Add Them)	P-3: Listen/Celebrate/Recognize
	P-4: Spend Time Lavishly on Recruiting
	P-5: Train and Retrain
	P-6: Provide Incentive Pay for Everyone
	P-7: Provide an Employment Guarantee
The Three Inhibitors (Take Them Away)	P-8: Simplify/Reduce Structure
	P-9: Reconceive the Middle Manager's Role
	P-10: Eliminate Bureaucratic Rules and Humiliating Conditions

Learning to Love Change: A New View of Leadership at All Levels

The Guiding Premise	L-1: Master Paradox
The Three Leadership Tools for Establishing Direction	L-2: Develop an Inspiring Vision
	L-3: Manage by Example
	L-4: Practice Visible Management
Leading by Empowering People	L-5: Pay Attention! (More Listening)
	L-6: Defer to the Front Line
	L-7: Delegate
	L-8: Pursue "Horizontal Management" by Bashing Bureaucracy
The Bottom Line: Leading as Love of Change	L-9: Evaluate Everyone on His or Her Love of Change
	L-10: Create a Sense of Urgency

Building Systems for a World Turned Upside Down

The Guiding Premise	S-1: Measure What's Important
Reconceiving the System Tools of Control and Empowerment	S-2: Revamp the Chief Control Tools
	S-3: Decentralize Information, Authority, and Strategic Planning
Establishing Trust Via Systems	S-4: Set Conservative Goals
	S-5: Demand Total Integrity

Power is also acquired in organizations by struggles to control those issues which pre-occupy senior management. New issues cross old territories. Who should "own" them? The middle level power struggle in an organization is in part, over ownership of new ideas which, by definition, cannot be fitted into existing functional boxes and which throw the meaning of functional distinctions up into the air to be re-negotiated. For example, at which level in the organization should productivity improvement programmes be negotiated and managed? Who should be included in their management?

Transfer of guru theory to Britain

The election of a Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher in 1979 occurred a year before the election of Ronald Regan to the White House. Both leaders emphasised competition, individualism and the survival of the fittest. Because of the similarity of their outlooks, the background conditions in both countries were equally receptive to the establishment and growth of management techniques based on the ideas of guru theory.

In Britain, the 1980s came to be seen as a period of widespread management innovation. The economic crisis of the early 1980s and the pressure from Japan reinforced each other. From the late 1970s the pressure of competition had forced many Western corporations, British ones among them, to re-examine their philosophy of job design and control, management style and organization structure, all from the down-to-earth perspective of profits. The cultural climate in which Britain operated since the start of the 1980s re-emphasised utilitarian values, the virtues of self-improvement, and the primacy of enterprise.

The dramatic rise of unemployment in Britain in the early 1980s shifted the economic power to the employers enabling them initially to force through previously unacceptable changes (core working, temporary work, part-timers) amidst a "climate of fear and uncertainty" (Littler and Salaman, 1984). It permitted a shake out of excess labour and the removal of restrictive practices. The 1980s, like the 1930s, spurred some employers to cut wages, extend hours, or impose straightforward labour intensification strategies

which involved no attempt at work re-organization. The average annual strike rate in Britain during the 1980s fell to its lowest for 50 years (Economist, 1989a).

Summarizing ten years of Conservative government, the Economist (1989b) gave the statistics. Productivity in manufacturing industry rose by 5-6% a year on average in 1980-88. Later in the decade, unemployment fell at last to below 2 million (7% of the labour force), while company profits rose to record levels. The top marginal rate of income tax fell from 83% to 40% thereby greatly increasing the rewards for success. Venture capital funds arose to supply entrepreneurs seeking to start their own companies. A booming stockmarket made it easy for large firms to raise new finance. Summarizing the decade's achievement, The Economist (1989b: 5) said that:

> "A new ethos and new optimism became apparent in all areas of business, one that seemed to favour ambition, hard work, working breakfasts, short lunches, marketing, buy-outs, restructuring total quality and any number of other buzzwords. Businessmen may not have swallowed all the government's propaganda about the re-birth of enterprise, but they had gradually regained confidence."

The economic coercion however, had its limits especially in a situation in which the nature of competition was changing. The new emphasis on quality meant that the reluctant acquiescence of employees had to be replaced by active co-operation. Thus one observed a combination of union-opposed structural changes to work (such as the introduction of a flexible firm structure) being combined with employee commitment strategies (e.g. quality circles, briefing groups, profit-sharing schemes). The change involved a contradictory mixture of job cuts, robots, union opposition and an attempt to engage the enthusiasm and willing involvement of the workforce.

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In explaining the adoption of specific management techniques in Britain, Ramsay (1977) had earlier argued that one could view such changes from the perspective of perceived environmental threats to management authority. He wrote about "cycles of control" and argued that techniques such as employee involvement or participation had evolved cyclically:

"(a)   They seem on each occasion to have arisen out of a
managerial response to threats to management authority ...
the initiative is management's and the consequence is, if
significant at all, to mollify pressures to change the status
quo, not to stimulate its reform.

(b)   Each time the schemes emphasise, almost without
exception a consensual unitary philosophy, and bear related
hallmarks of managerial ideology".

Ramsay (1977: 496)

These points were alluded to earlier. In the light of economic developments in Britain from the mid-1980s onwards, one finds the popular techniques reflecting the collaborative theme. Peters and Waterman's suggestion about "Management by Walking About" was turned into a video training film produced by The Industrial Society. That same organization had earlier promoted one of the most widely adopted management techniques of the 1980s - briefing groups. Finally, the concern with total quality management prompted the use of quality circles.

Elsewhere in Europe, American management guru ideas were being well received. Lorenz (1986a) concluded that, despite all their suspicion of transatlantic influences, Europeans were more open to American ideas than to those of each other. While he felt that the European guru boom would continue, he did not feel that European managers would ever become as fashion conscious as their American counterparts. In particular, he noted the

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European aversion to emulating the American tendency to go overboard for the latest idea while neglecting the previous one. He concluded that European managements were more cautious about new management ideas. Considering the success of American authored books in continental Europe, Lorenz (1986a) referred to the German situation where there was a feeling of insecurity about which were the right management methods to apply. When in the past everyone had been successful, there was no need for external role models such as Iacocca, but in the 1980s that need did re-surface.

French observers also reported a cultural change towards both management, making money, and to an enterprise culture. French publishing houses successfully marketed the writings of Ouchi (1981), McKenna (1985), Naisbitt (1982), Peters and Waterman (1982), and Bennis and Nanus (1985). They did much to woo French executives away from their previous scepticism of American business concepts. In France, noted Lorenz (1986a), 100,000 copies of ISOE were sold in three years. He also reported the greater readiness of the French to learn lessons from others, that is, engaging in a search for new answers in an increasingly competitive environment. However, national differences still remained. There was French resistance to some American gurus amongst those French executives who had received a very rigorous intellectual training. This may account, said Lorenz, for the failure of The One Minute Manager book (Blanchard and Johnson, 1983) which was considered too simplistic. The Germans in contrast were more pragmatic, taking an if-it-works-we'll-try-it view.

CONCLUSION

What then of the future? What will be the next management idea that will flourish and possibly make its inventor a millionaire? Stuart (1986) wrote that new themes in the thinking of managers became more popular as the economic trends which prompted these thoughts touched the lives of more people. An intellectual fad was a reliable, if slightly lagging indicator of economic activity. He recommended that the first place to look for signs of an up-and-coming fad was in the economy itself.

The Economist (1988b) argued that business, after years of being admired, feted, given its head by politicians and a public desperate for a prosperous way out of the complexities of oil shocks, inflation and unemployment would, in the 1990s, be questioned, criticised and perhaps even vilified. To support this contention the paper cited some "straws in the wind". First, the absence in mid-1989 of business books in the top positions of best selling American books. Second, the stabalization of applications to American business schools and the rise of applications to law schools. Third, the emergence in Japan of the *datsu-sara* (corporate runaway), the manager who dropped out to do his own thing. Fourth, the report of a survey amongst West Germans in which they placed pollution as the major perceived problem ahead of their 7.75% unemployment rate. Anti-business tendencies said the Economist were likely to be exacerbated by resentments about the size of executive pay and perks when those people ceased to be regarded as folk-heroes. The growth of the green lobby would stress the part of large companies as environment wreckers, while unemployment would rise and the companies would be blamed for it.

The turning of the pro-business tide might represent the cyclical phenomenon described in this chapter. American suspicions of business have oscillated. There were the anti-trust laws of the 1890s, the New Deal of the 1930s, the rebelliousness of the 1960s. Each occurred after a pro-business period. The next anti-business mood however, will not, in the Economists's view, be general but will instead be focused upon large companies and money dealers such bankers. The signs however are confusing. A single event, such as the Gulf War, can make prediction impossible. However, Rose (1990), writing in Fortune magazine, reported the resurgence in America of a new paradigm for viewing the world. Love and caring were back in the workplace. The institutions and ideas of neo-human relations, he felt, were about to make a comeback. Perhaps the final comment might be given to John Taylor, the Marketing Director of Cadbury's, who in 1991, are launching a new chocolate snack called "Strollers". A review of the launch (Daily Telegraph, 1991) reported that in chocolate marketing speech, Strollers was a "paced eat" rather than a "gap fill". Strollers apparently accorded with what Cadbury's predicted the Nineties lifestyle would be like - less concentrated eating and more nibbling.

Taylor commented that the snacks, "... *slip down very easily while you are thinking of something else*". Perhaps the management fads of the Nineties will be similar.

This chapter has argued that the timing of the launch of a management idea is a crucial factor in its success. The implication for management gurus is that they should carefully choose their moment when launching an existing idea, or they ought to consider the social, economic and political aspects of the period, and develop an idea which is in tune with the times.

However relevant to the period a management idea is, it will not succeed if managers are unaware of it. For this reason, its existence needs to be commented. Business school academics play a part in this communication process, and the next chapter considers how an idea can be made attractive to them.

CHAPTER 4

BUSINESS SCHOOL GATEKEEPERS

INTRODUCTION

However intrinsically appealing and in tune with its time a management idea might be, it needs to gain visibility if it is to be noticed by its potential audience and customers. Part of this visibility is provided by business school academics who, to a limited but important degree, act as gatekeepers of these management ideas.

This chapter considers the gatekeeping role of business school academics with respect to management ideas presented to managers and students. Until the 1980s, the main source of these ideas were the recommended readings and lecture presentations of teaching staff in the business management departments of colleges, polytechnics and universities. It was they who decided what would be taught and what would be read. During the 1980s this situation changed radically as the boom in business book publishing took off in both the United States and Britain. For the first time, texts such as Peters and Waterman's (1982) and Iacocca (1985) sold in their millions and directly appealed to and were bought by managers, without the intercession of business academics.

Despite this, business school faculty have in the past and will continue in the future, to exert a key influence with respect to decisions concerning whose ideas will be read, discussed and examined. There is little or nothing in the way of research about which factors guide lecturers' choices in these matters. However, this lack of existing empirical work should not preclude the possibility of suggesting a number of possible explanations. These will inevitably be at the level of speculation. The aim will be to present and assess the strengths and weaknesses of each hypothesis in terms of its explanatory potential. A priori hypotheses will be presented which will, to some degree, be tested empirically in the study.

It is hypothesised that business school academics have a number of different personal objectives which influence their choice of which management ideas to teach. Six influencing factors are identified. The first three are general to all academics, while the last three are specific to those working in business

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management schools and departments. It is hypothesised that the selection of management ideas for teaching by business school academics is influenced by:

1. The potential offered by a management idea for the conduct of research and its publication, and thereby for the academics promotion.

2. The interest generated by a management idea amongst other business school academics, management students and managers.

3. The teachability of a management idea.

4. The potential for consultancy work offered to the academic by the management idea.

5. The extent to which business academics see themselves as promoting a managerial ethos.

6. The belief by an academic that there is a "true", or "correct" idea which is of value to students.

It is recognised that there are some inconsistencies and some trade-offs between those objectives. It is unlikely that one would be able to select a single management idea which provided a business school academic with all the benefits and no disadvantages. There is also the element of choice. Where a set curriculum exists, academics have little freedom to choose what they teach.

There are severe difficulties in presenting an analysis of the selection process because of the length of time covered by the management ideas. Thus in considering these choices, the focus is more upon the present and recent past. Moreover, there is no evidence to suggest that in seeking to achieve

the aforementioned objectives, business school academics inhibit the profitable generation of management ideas or their associated idea-techniques.

Indeed, it can be argued that it is the unique work circumstances of business school academics with respect to their customer market for their products (as compared with their counterparts in other departments), which has generated the variety and volume of management ideas that one now sees. In other organizational contexts, managers are seen to achieve their own personal objectives while at the same time meeting the company requirements to produce products, services and profits. To that extent the situation is the same. Each of these six considerations will now be considered in turn.

RESEARCHABILITY

In terms of achieving promotion in an academic environment, the main factors taken into account are research, teaching and administration. Of the three, research output has historically received the greatest weighting, partly due to the ease with which it can be objectively and quantitatively measured. Depending on the particular circumstances of the academic, some may see the conduct of research and its publication as an end in itself. They will consider any possible promotion flowing from this research as an incidental bonus. This might be labelled the intrinsic value view. Alternatively, an academic may take an extrinsic view and see research and publication as a means to an end, with the securing of a permanent post or of promotion as the valued end. How might these intrinsic and extrinsic orientations influence the choice of management ideas selected for research purposes?

There are two aspects to consider with respect to an academic's career progression in relation to a research topic. The first has to do with the selection of the research, while the second relates to the question of how best to present the findings so as to achieve maximum career benefit. Both individual and institutional status is enhanced by the securing of research grants and the publication of research findings. Despite the lip service paid to

the value of non-research activity, research will remain a major factor in further and higher education. Staff in management institutions with heavy teaching loads continue to be encouraged to conduct research and to publish by being provided with research time allowances.

British universities have been graded on the amount of research grants achieved, and on the quality and volume of their research output. The Council for National Academic Awards evaluates its degree-granting institutions on various criteria including library provision, and the research and publication record of its faculty. The polytechnics continue to offer higher degrees by research, including doctorates, which itself suggests a commitment and capacity on their part, to provide the necessary infrastructural support for this level of work. Any academic seeking to transfer from a polytechnic to a university, or to achieve a permanent post or promotion at within a university, needs to show a consistent research publication record.

What aspects of a management idea would give it a research appeal in the eyes of business school academics? Four possible characteristics are suggested. The first of these is the **replicability** potential of the research. More specifically, can it produce a "quickie" study for the academic? Second, that management idea or an aspect of it, should be bounded or **self-contained** for research purposes. A third factor is the use of a methodology which is sanctioned or favoured by those who have the power to **promote** the researching academic. Four, there is the **topicality** aspect. Some management subjects are so topical that researchers find it easy to get their work published. The problem is that topical subjects can go quickly out of fashion. Each of these factors will be examined in turn.

Replicability

Both the conduct of research and the publication of results, are a time-consuming and complex business. This is particularly true if the academic concerned has a heavy teaching load. One way to overcome this problem is to fit the research into the time available by conducting mini-studies on subjects which are both topical and to which respondent

access is non-problematic. The American National Institute of Education (1984) noted that longitudinal research in social science was risky for untenured staff. The production of a certain number of refereed "little papers" increased the likelihood of tenure and promotion at the cost of in-depth study and the understanding of the phenomena. Argyris (1976) contended that research in organizational behaviour tended to be short run and narrowly focused. What are the characteristics of such mini-studies? They tend to be replicatory rather than innovatory studies. They are based on existing management or social science ideas and use existing research instruments which have been developed and tested by others.

The area of neo-human relations has proved to be particularly attractive to business school academics seeking to conduct replicatory studies. Wahba and Bridwell (1975) identified 62 published research studies conducted between 1961 and 1973 which sought to test empirically Maslow's needs hierarchy theory. The cited studies were conducting by leading American management academics (e.g. Alderfer, Beer, Schneider, Haire, Ghiselli, Slocum). Having attracted the attention of this influential group, one can conclude that the same idea was researched by many lesser known management teachers around the world. Wahba and Bridwell's extensive bibliography shows numerous other related research studies. These include journal articles and books which actually contain the words "Maslow" or "needs hierarchy" in their titles (Hall and Noughaim, 1968; Huizinga, 1970: Payne, 1970; Roberts et al. 1971; Goodman, 1968; Waters and Roach, 1973: Lawler and Suttle, 1972).

During 1960s a great deal of research was conducted to replicate Herzberg's "Two Factor Theory of Motivation" (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 1959; Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg, 1968). Herzberg conducted his original research using a critical incident research approach on groups of accountants and engineers. The use of this research method and sample population, offered a wide scope for other academics to investigate other groups of workers to see if the theory applied equally to nurses, salespeople, dentists, or indeed any other occupational grouping.

For the more sophisticated, a different research methodology could be used to check if the same results were obtained with groups of engineers and accountants. During the 1960s and early 1970s, the Journal of Applied Psychology and similar publications, contained numerous replicatory studies of Herzberg's theory (Myers, 1964; Saleh, 1964; Schwartz, Jenusatis and Stark, 1963; Schwab and Heneman, 1970). Later, these same journals contained critiques of such replicatory research (Whitsett and Winslow, 1967: King, 1970).

In the 1970s, the "Individual Learning Styles and Learning Process" model developed by Kolb (1971) achieved widespread popularity and acceptance. The model was easily comprehended and came complete with a research instrument called the "Learning Styles Inventory" (Freedman and Stumpf, 1978; Lewis and Margerison, 1979; Sugarman, 1985; Wilson, 1986). In the 1980s, the Kolb model was refined by Honey and Mumford (1982) into the Learning Styles Questioinnaire (LSQ) and thereby received a new lease of life. Allison and Hayes (1988) reported an example of the application of the LSQ instrument.

Other replication strategies have involved talking to a group of businessmen (all deemed to be "successful"), to account for their success and then analyse recurring features. This last replication strategy, as the guru theory section of the last chapter showed, has been particularly adopted by consultants and journalists (de Bono, 1986; Lomax, 1986; Robinson, 1985; Carlisle, 1985).

The replication of such management ideas offers academics who are short of time, a way of doing research on their own, perhaps by using their management students as research subjects. Many of these students are likely to be working managers. Once obtained and analysed, this data can be published. No new research methods are required. Moreover, the research findings of other studies on the same theme can be used for purposes of comparison. Thus, it is hypothesised, that those management ideas which offer academics the opportunity to do "quickie" research study, will be preferred in presentations to those that do not.

Self-contained ideas

It is argued that business school academics will be attracted to research those management ideas which are in some way bounded or whose topic has clearly defined parameters or dimensions. It was Miner (1980: 454-5) who considered the fruitfulness of certain theoretical approaches from the point of view of researching academics, rather than of practising managers. He felt that contingency theories which stressed a single contingency variable, such as technology or environmental uncertainty, had not done well in achieving widespread appeal and use. Indeed, the "grand theories" which covered a wide spectrum had fared worse than those with a limited scope. Thus he felt that systems theory was unlikely to provide a source of replication work because it attempted too much, spread its propositions too thinly, and its abstract and abstruse constructs were difficult to operationalize. Its underlying assumption (that every variable must be related to ever other) was a basic article of faith. System theory left potential researchers perplexed when what they needed was a set of directional, causal hypotheses of maximum predictive power.

How well does this explanation match the facts? Weber's theory of bureaucracy, identified as being one of the most popular ideas may be considered by some readers as a grand theory and hence as contradicting the argument being presented here. However, Weber's theory does "break down" into bounded and easily researchable parts. The ten characteristics of bureaucracy presented by Weber each offered the basis for empirical research which challenged the notion of rationality and efficiency attributed to bureaucratic forms of organization. The theory therefore spawned a large number of major and minor studies. Some of these have themselves become classics in the organizational and managerial literature.

Selnick (1966) concentrated on the division of functions within an organization and showed that sub-units established goals of their own which conflicted with the purposes of the organization as a whole. Bendix (1949) challenged the belief of the possibility of adhering to rules without the intrusion of social and political values. Blau (1955) asked what would constitute rational administration and compared Weber's answer with his own. Gouldner (1954) investigated differences of rule compliance in a

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bureaucracy and its effect on the efficient working of an organization. Stinchcombe's (1959) investigations into the U.S. building industry led him to conclude that efficiency could not be guaranteed by tethering an official to a rigid set of rules.   Presthus's (1961) study of the Turkish coal industry led him to contend that Weber's concept made implicit assumptions about human motivation which were not valid in non-Western environments. Delaney (1962) felt that patrimonial administration was more conducive to economic growth in under-developed societies than rational bureaucracy of the Weberian type.   Finally, the theory of bureaucracy provided a source of critiques of the methodology used by Weber (Blau and Scott, 1963).

The scientific management ideas of Taylor were not grasped by eager business school researchers keen to test his ideas. What scientific management did was to generate a group of followers or disciples. People such as the Gilbreths and Gantt developed, refined and promoted Taylor's ideas. Separately and in an unrelated way, research groups in Britain (the Industrial Fatigue Research Board) and in the United States (the Harvard Business School researchers at the Hawthorne works) worked on the problems of worker productivity and morale. Independently of each other, they came to the conclusion that simple, short-cycle, repetitive jobs were likely to lead to increased turnover, absenteeism and other managerially undesirable outcomes.   It was only then that job simplification and standardization, as specified by Taylor, came to be related. Hence, it was not until the 1950s that one can talk about "research on Taylor" being conducted. The work of Walker and Guest (1952), Turner and Lawrence (1965), and Blauner (1964) and Argyris (1964) examined the effects of fragmented jobs on individual workers, and considered the benefits of job rotation and job enlargement strategies.

Some of the individual principles of classical administrative theory have provided the basis for research. Graicunus (1937) produced a mathematical proof to support the concept of a narrow span of control, while Starbuck (1965) produced a mathematical formulation of the hierarchical principle. However, it was the claim by the classical theorists that these principles of organization had a universal validity, that prompted the rush to research. The work of Burns and Stalker (1961) indicated the suitability of mechanistic and organismic structural forms in different circumstances.   Woodward

(1958) argued that technology was a major factor in deciding upon the most appropriate structural form.Pugh and his associates (Pugh and Hickson, 1976; Pugh and Hinings, 1976; Pugh and Payne, 1977, Hickson and Macmillan 1981) identified organizational size and its dependence on other organizations, as critical variables which influenced the choice of a structural form; and Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) highlighted environmental adaption as a crucial variable.

The work of Mayo and the human relations theorists flourished as researchers sought to check what the Hawthorne studies had shown, or what they felt that they had shown. The research examined the effect of supervision and morale upon worker productivity (Miller and Form, 1964); the relationship of sex, age, background on employee attitude, productivity and turnover (Brayfield and Crockett, 1955; Mausner, Peterson and Capwell, 1957); factors affecting job satisfaction (Fournet, Distefano and Pryer, 1966); the links between supervision style, productivity and morale (Scott and Homans, 1947; French, Isreal and Aas, 1960); the relationship between authoritarian leadership and close supervision and low productivity and morale (Viteles, 1953); and correlations between leadership and morale (Survey Research Centre, 1950; Morse, 1953). Thus, it is hypothesised that bounded or self-contained, and thereby more easily researchable management ideas, will be preferred for presentation over those which are not so restricted.

Promotability

A third factor which may determine management idea choice is the acceptability of the research methodology to those who have the power to promote. An example of this phenomenon is provided by the theory of inter-temporal strike activity. Following a spate of articles on this topic in American industrial relations journals, Wheeler who held the rank of full professor complained that:

"Just as national industrial relations systems undergo strike waves from time to time, so has the academic field of industrial relations periodically been swept by waves of macro-level strike literature".

Wheeler (1984: 263)

Wheeler complained that these research studies had failed to produce any meaningful results, were plagued by meaningless measures, cloudy conceptualizations and confusing conclusions of little value. He concluded that such research was fruitless and should be abandoned on favour of more promising strategies. In reply, Kaufmann (1984) acknowledged the narrow quantitative focus of this field of research; its pre-occupation with issues of statistical estimation and specification of empirical relationships; and its general deductive reasoning divorced from historical evidence or actual practice. He attributed the cause of this methodological approach to research (which dominated economics and other academic disciplines) to a number of factors. Kaufmann's comments will be quoted in full:

"A review of all the articles on strikes written over the past 15 years in the United States would reveal, I think, that nearly all were written by assistant professors and in a number of cases (such as my own) as the result of dissertations. Scholars who are just beginning their careers approach research, I believe, at least in part, from an 'instrumental' point of view, choosing, that is, a research topic and style of research that will most further their chances of employment and promotion. The strike literature clearly reflects the choices made, as young academics have searched for a topic that allows them to demonstrate their skills with at least one, or even better both, of the tools of our science; the deductive use of formalized theory to derive predictions and the use of regression to test those predictions."

Kaufmann (1984: 271)

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What were the chances of those doing research into strikes adopting the time consuming case study approach and going into the field to talk to workers and managers? Kaufmann felt that,

> *"What strike research really needs is a fusion of the 'go and see'*
> *investigative case study approach ... Will strike researchers leave the*
> *computer room and library for the arduous and time consuming*
> *task of doing a case study? I doubt it; most of us will probably*
> *content ourselves with further statistical exploration of strikes, albeit*
> *in more disaggregated ways ... Why are we still trying to 'push the*
> *rock up the hill ?' - we do so partly, I suspect, as a rational response*
> *to the kind of research that our profession rewards."*

<p style="text-align: right;">Kaufmann (1984: 272)</p>

Thus it is hypothesised that research topics, methods and designs which accord with the views of senior professors of what is relevant and appropriate, will be preferred for presentation over those which do not.

Topicality

The topicality variable relates to the observation that there is a greater interest in studies and subjects when they relate to the current concerns and pre-occupations of a particular group or sub-group. In recent years, "copycat" research based around the subject of excellence has been prevalent. The subject of excellence in medium-sized U.S. companies was studied (Clifford and Cavanagh, 1986); excellence in large U.K. companies (Clutterbuck and Goldsmith, 1985); excellence of marketing among U.S. and U.K. companies (McBurnie and Clutterbuck, 1987); and an identification of the excellent companies to work for as an employee in the U.S. (O'Toole, 1985). In addition, the phenomenal success of Peters and Waterman's (1982) book also spawned a "who's excellent now" literature which sought to identify why companies which had once been judged to be "excellent", had slipped in

their performance (Business Week, 1984; Carrol, 1983). It is hypothesised that business school academics will select for presentation those ideas which draw on their own research.

INTERESTING THEORIES

A second possible explanation of how academics come to choose the ideas that they teach and research, relates to the notion of interest. Business school academics may be attracted to those management ideas that they find interesting. What makes an idea interesting to a business school academic?

Some ideas, and particularly theories, have always generated more interest amongst academics than others ideas. Davis (1971) conducted an analysis of the features of interesting theories in the social sciences. His work has a direct application to the field of management. The ability to stimulate interest, argued Davis, was a necessary, if not sufficient characteristic of a great or popular theory. What then was it that made people consider a theory to be interesting? What led them to "sit up and take notice"? What motivated them to discuss, footnote and examine the theory in journal? To confirm or deny it in dissertations? To teach it to students as the most recent instance of "progress" in their field? Davis stated that the defining characteristic of a theory which audiences considered interesting was that it stood out in their attention in contrast to,

> "... the web of rountinely taken-for-granted propositions which make up the theoretical structure of their everyday life ... a new theory will be noticed only when it denies an old truth, proverb, platitude, maxim, adage, saying, commonplace, etc."

Davis (1971: 311)

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His conclusion was that interesting theories <u>denied</u> certain assumptions held by their audiences, while non-interesting theories affirmed such assumptions. Davis argued that a theorist was considered great, not because his theories were true, but because they were **interesting**. The truth of a theory, he felt, had very little to do with its impact. A theory could continue to be found to be interesting even though its truth was disputed or even refuted. Attention will be first paid to considering the theories that business academics find interesting. The issue of what managers and management students consider interesting will be tackled next.

A good example of an interesting theory in management is Blake and Mouton's (1964) "Grid Development" approach which many observers see as having come out of the Likert and the Ohio studies on leadership. Bryman (1986) took a typically sceptical academic view about the approach which has been widely espoused by American, if not British, managers, and which has earned its developers a considerable sum of money. According to Bryman (1986:78),

> "... the presence of equivocal findings is not conducive to an overly sanguine view about the validity of the schema. The pattern of inconclusive results is highly reminiscent of much Ohio-based leadership research, while the persistent emphasis on the 'one-best-way' of managing will continue to hamper progress in discerning the viability of the Managerial Grid."

Bryman's comment about Likert's System 4 idea was broadly similar,

> " This is not to say that System 4, any more than grid organizational development, is of no use. In each case, the evidence is ambiguous and open to a variety of interpretations ... writers like Likert still operate with roughly the 'one-best-way' approach that the early researchers on leadership style found so difficult to substantiate."

> Bryman (1986: 83)

Many of Bryman's observations hold true for the theories of writers such as Maslow, Argyris and Herzberg. Many of these continue to be considered interesting by management teachers despite the fact that their methodology has shown to be flawed. Davis felt that to be considered interesting, a theory had to deny some part of the audience's routinely held assumptions. If it did not challenge but merely affirmed taken-for-granted beliefs, then its value would be rejected while its truth was affirmed. The audience would respond, "that's obvious".

Turning to an examination of the cognitive structure of an interesting theory, Davis described how interesting theories were generated. He examined numerous, widely circulating and popular social science theories, in order to isolate the common elements of interest and to account for similarities and differences. He was able to identify the common element in all the ones he studied. He noted that,

> "All of the interesting propositions I examined were found to involve the radical distinction between seeming and being, between the subject of phenomenology and the subject of ontology. An interesting proposition was one which first articulated a phenomenological presumption about the way a particular part of the world had looked, and then denied this phenomenological presumption in the name of "truth", that is, in the name of a more profound, more real, more ontological criterion. Put more precisely, an interesting proposition was one which attempted first to expose the ontological claim of its accredited counterpart as merely phenomenological pretence, and then to deny this phenomenological pretence with its own claim to ontological priority. In brief, an interesting proposition was always a negation of an accepted one. All of the interesting propositions that I examined were easily translatable into the form: 'What seems to be X is in reality non-X', or 'What is accepted as X is actually non-X."

Davis (1971: 313)

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To summarize, a proposition is interesting not because it tells its audience some truth that they had not already known, but because it tells them that some information that they hold to be true is in fact false. An interesting proposition therefore has to deny some aspect of the assumption ground of its audience. Having judged a theory to be interesting, why should an academic designing a course, deciding on a research topic, or moving into consultancy, incorporate it in his work? There are distinctions at the logical level between the different theories. In all, Davis identified twelve logical categories which focused on either a single phenomenon or on relations between a number of phenomena.

Part of the interest of any theory would be reflected in the stimulus it gave to new work. The interest generated by the Hawthorne Studies resulted in a great deal of writing about the human relations school. Miller and Form (1964) noted that many critics have appeared and that much has been said about the Hawthorne research. They argued that Mayo's research became *"a very important stimulant of the renaissance in small group research"* (p. 680). These authors linked Mayo' work to that of Kurt Lewin's field theory of group dynamics; Moreno's sociometry of interpersonal relationships; and Bales' studies of face-to-face interactions in small groups. They argued that Mayo and his associates posed the problems and pointed the way. Since World War II, a host of researchers have added new knowledge.

The critics of this research have included major names of the period in management theory and social science. For example, Michael Argyle, Reinhart Bendix, Herbert Blumer, John T. Dunlop, Georges Friedman, Clark Kerr, Robert S. Lynd, and C.W. Mills. A decade later, Carey (1967) repeated the exercise by providing a critique of the literature and of the criticisms themselves.

The work of neo-human relationists such as Herzberg has created interest on both sides of the Atlantic, albeit in different ways. To the Americans, the issue was seen as a technical problem. The independent variables of achievement, recognition, and responsibility were considered in terms of their effect on the dependent ones of absence, turnover and morale. The two factor theory offered ample scope for the testing of the relationships themselves, and their relationships in different contexts. Additional interest

in the theory was generated by viewing the issue of motivation as an ideological or political one. From this perspective, the question of interest was not how to motivate workers, but how to re-design society. Following Marx, British writers such as Willmott, Clegg, Dunkerely have joined Marglin and Braverman to investigate how job enrichment came to represent a more subtle form of managerial control of workers.

Thus it is hypothesised that management ideas that academics find interesting will be preferred over those that they do not.

TEACHABILITY

Teaching plays an important part of the job of all management academics. In many polytechnic and college institutions, student contact takes up a substantial amount of the total lecturer's time. How might business school academics' teaching responsibilities influence their choice of management ideas to teach?

Some management academics have written their own textbook. All of them however, use a textbook, and the majority have discretion as to which textbook they will adopt for a course and recommend to their students. Most management textbooks invariably cover more material than can be presented in any course. The lecturer thus has to make choices and that choice will be guided, at least partly, by the teaching materials available.

Although they may play different roles, business school academics act as "gatekeepers" of knowledge, deciding which ideas will, and which will not be presented to the managers and management students in their classes. The personal choices they make will determine the dissemination level and hence the popularity of different management ideas. As the first line consumers of management ideas, academics may be guided by their desire to find useful and relevant teaching material to a generally critical audience of managers and management students; and secondly, to adequately fill teaching time slots of between one and three hours.

When dealing with a critical audience of managers and management students, the lecturer is likely to place the emphasis on presenting management ideas which have both a face-validity and an action element. That is, they will sound sensible to the listeners and can be quickly applied by them. There is a trade-off here since these ideas will not necessarily be the ones that lecturer will seek to research nor which he will necessarily find interesting.

The teachability variable does not appear to be exerting a profound effect on lecturer choice of ideas as far as post-graduate programmes are concerned. Surveys of MBA programmes in both Britain and the United States have criticised them for being too theoretical and failing to help managers *perform* more effectively. This perhaps suggests a continuing preference by business academics to teach those ideas that they, rather than their students find interesting. All things being equal, which they are not, and using the two criteria face-validity and action orientation, one would expect a lecturer to prefer parts of motivation theory and learning theory in favour of a more complex and abstract idea such as socio-technical systems theory.

Lecturers select teaching materials (case studies, role plays and training films) which fill up the class contact time. The selection of management ideas can be influenced by their possessing a teaching support element. The American practice of supporting a best-selling textbook with a book of cases, readings, question test bank, simulations, computer software and overhead projector masters, all suggests that these are important adoption criteria.

Even without this supporting infrastructure, some management ideas are more amenable to easy presentation than others. An example is Vroom and Yetton's research on leadership style. Published originally in the early 1970s, the research identified five different decision-making styles, and related these to seven key variables (Vroom and Yetton, 1973). This research offered scope for potential mini-research case studies as outlined in an earlier section. However, for the non-researching academic, its main strength was its teaching potential. American and British management

teaching support manuals quickly translated the research methodology used into an easy-to-use, one to two-hour teaching session package (see for example, Hall et al., 1975).

Vroom and Yetton's approach has established itself as a popular one in business schools and management departments in Britain and elsewhere. However, there is little evidence to suggest that it has broken out beyond the confines of academic circles, or has been well received by management consultants who act as brokers in translating academic ideas into managerial ones. Prescott (1980), a training officer, did extend Vroom and Yetton's model, and made it more easily accessible in a self-learning form. However, it has not been taken further. The reason for this lack of widespread adoption may be partly to do with the content features of the idea which were discussed in Chapter two. Here one would particularly cite its relative complexity (no "one-best-way"); and its lack of management control (certain styles permitted subordinate decision-making discretion).

A third aspect of teachability, which links to the previous point concerning research, is the general preference of business school academics to teach subjects that they are researching. The primary benefits to lecturers of this policy are the reduced need for preparation and the increased credibility in the eyes of students which comes from using teaching material that they have generated from their own research. Thus two influencing factors, researchability and teachability, generally although not always, reinforce one other.

Considering the aforementioned requirements, one can argue that scientific management, human relations, neo-human relations and administrative management have had great teachability potential. Taylor and Gilberth's work on time-and-motion study facilitated the communication of their underlying ideas. Case studies illustrating the application of administrative management principles. Despite the fact that human relations and neo-human relations ideas were developed in the 1940s and 1950s, it was not until the 1960s that experiential exercises demonstrating human relations principles became widely available (Pfeiffer and Jones, 1970). The availability of such teaching materials, the intense student participation they

evoked, plus the lessons for management that they offered, all led to neo-human relations becoming a prominent topic on the management courses.

The two popular management ideas which are less easy to teach are bureaucracy and guru theory. Apart from being currently unfashionable, bureaucracy is a topic which students read about and discuss with the tutor, rather one than which is directly taught. Few of the current textbooks include exercises on bureaucracy, although Weber's work is mentioned briefly in the historical section of management textbooks and in books of industrial sociology readings. Moreover, bureaucracy is no longer a popular research topic of the 1980s.

In a similar vein, it is only lately that textbooks have begun to incorporate guru theory. Apart from its newness, guru theory is a diverse collection of writings, much of them all of them specific problem-solution focused. While the writings of Peters and Waterman, Iacocca, Geneen, Scully and others have a high face-validity and action orientation for students and managers, they do present major problems of teachability as far as the lecturer in a business management school environment is concerned.

CONSULTANCY INCOME

For some business school academics, the earning of additional income through consultancy represents an important aspect of their work. Some academics will readily admit to this, while others will deny it. While this is not easily researchable, it nevertheless remains an influential factor. A number of business schools actively encourage their faculty to engage in consultancy work and see it as an important way for them to keep in touch with potential clients. Other schools, constrained either by nationally agreed pay scales or by the economic position of their parent institution, encourage staff to earn outside income to make up what might be considered an adequate salary. Business schools such as Oxford and Ashridge specify in their advertisements for lecturing staff, the number of days teaching

required. The implication being that the remaining time is available for private earning activities. A survey by the Economist (13 Feb 1988) estimated that a third of consulting services in the USA and UK, was provided by academics.

What type of consultancy is the business school academic likely to do? Once again, this is an area where little information is available, and one can only speculate. Consulting work can broadly be divided into two areas - advising through provision of specialist information, and teaching on in-company courses. As an unsupported generalization, one might say that the lecturer at a college, polytechnic or university is more likely to engage in the latter than in the former. How might teaching on in-company, non-graduating courses affect the selection of management ideas?

The pyramidal nature of organizations means that the course participants are most likely to be supervisors, junior managers and middle managers in that order. The nature of the jobs of these people means that a predictable range of management topics will be addressed. Typically course subjects for managers working at the operational level include interpersonal skills, motivation, communication, delegation, decision-making, problem-solving, time management and leadership style. Thus the subjects to be taught and hence the ideas to be presented are often pre-selected by the nature of the job that the course participants occupy.

A second sifting process occurs as a result of the existing knowledge base of the participants. Research by Handy (1988), Constable and McCormack (1987) and Mangham and Silver (1986) has shown that the majority of supervisors and managers have received little or no previous management training. Only 7% have ever attended any management course, and only 2% have a management qualification of any sort. The effect of this is that the management academic is, for the most part, dealing with an unsophisicated audience in Britain. The management ideas to be presented have to be simple enough to be understood by an audience who perhaps is being exposed to management training for the first time. Failure to communicate means that the consultant will not be invited to return. Salaman and Butler

(1990) have made some insightful observations on this topic. Thus, there are twin pressures which direct management academics, operating in their consultancy teaching role, towards a sub-set of management ideas.

Third, in-company courses present an additional constraint. On occasions, the academic may be informed of the approach to the subject that he is to take. For example, a company may be seeking to develop an "organizational style" of management which uses a behaviour modification and modelling approach. The lecturer may be told to develop his interpersonal skills course around this approach. On occasions, specific ideas to be taught may be identified by the company training manager. For example, Blanchard and Johnson's (1983) *"The One Minute Manager"* or Schein's (1978) *"Career Anchors"* concept. Thus consultancy activity can directly influence the choice of management ideas, either through the type of managerial position held by the students receiving the management training, or through the pre-specification of the ideas to be taught by the client organization.

Consultancy services (whether in the form of training or advice) will be sought by companies in those areas in which they need help and lack the necessary in-house expertise. In the field of management and organizational behaviour, the issues will be in three main areas, how to organize the work to be done, how to motivate people to do it, and how to meet any new government requirements.

The answers to these questions change over time and have provided the topics for consultancy work. Discussing the situation in the United States, Kanter (1985: 44) used the Business Periodicals listings to identify changes in the corporate environment between 1960 and 1980. The topics that declined or disappeared in between those two dates were management rights, work measurement, work sampling, and collective bargaining. Those that grew in prominence in the same time period were employee rights, selection, training, motivation, and a "new" management style involving teamwork and participation.

During the late 1980s, personnel journals in the United States addressed themselves to changes in government legislation such as the ending of polygraph testing, age discrimination, and changes in the way companies

administered health care. In Britain management topics that stimulated little interest in the past have been rising in prominence. The demographic trends which show a declining number of new school leavers have stimulated an interest in topics such as women in management, the employment of the handicapped and the attraction to employment of ethnic minorities. One can expect that the demand for training courses and consultancy advice in these areas will increase in the future as organizations and management address themselves to these new problems.

This sifting process means that the business school academic who runs in-company courses is likely to be teaching basic introductory material on "people management" in general, and motivation and leadership in particular, to company staff at the supervisory and junior management level, few of whom would have attended any previous management courses. Described in this way, the range of available management ideas for teaching is limited.

PRO-MANAGEMENT ATTITUDE

A fifth factor which can influence the choice of management ideas by the business school academic is their view of their role as legitimating the role of managers and management practice. This group sees the role of the academic as being concerned with increasing managerial effectiveness and organizational performance (the pro-management school). There are industrial sociologists who argue that the role of business school academics is to raise the class consciousness of managers and make them more aware of how they are exploiting the workers (e.g. Hyman, Willmott, Clegg, Dunkerely, Salaman, Marglin).

The pro-management academics take the rights of managers and owners as given. Their concern is upon finding out through research, how individual and organizational performance might can be increased. They then seek to communicate their findings and prescriptions to managers through teaching

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and consultancy. As circumstances change and existing ideas and techniques are found wanting, new ideas are promoted. Management is seen exclusively as a technical problem to be solved.

Why should pro-management business school academics be concerned with legitimising management activity. Does management need legitimating in 1990? Writing from a Marxist perspective, Marglin (1979: 76-7) argued that the greatest achievement of the modern, rational form of organization was that it no longer needed external ideological justification. In his view, it had become an ideology in its own right. One can challenge this assessment since one sees institutions such as the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), British Institute of Management (BIM), Institute of Directors, as well as The Industrial Society, at different times, have continued to explain the contribution that industry makes to society in general and the part that managers play in particular.

Clegg and Dunkerley (1980), writing about the role of business schools, considered their main role to be that of ideological reproduction. What participants did in these schools, in their view, was to learn this ideology through the study of rational science and the techniques of modern management. One finds the same critique being put forward separately by both Perrow and Willmott,

> "By providing the concepts of 'the organization' for instance, which are absolutely independent of any political economy, but related only to presumed universal systems of structures by organizations, and by stressing the universal applicability of these 'rational concepts' (which on closer inspection are not always so logically pure as they might seem), these schools produce, on the whole, sound and reliable ruling-class functionaries who have complex rules built into them."

Perrow (1972:27)

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"A striking point about empirical studies of managerialist work in capital enterprises is their disregard for its institutional formation and significance. In general, the institutional conditioning and consequences of managerial work is either bracketed, taken for granted, or treated as an independent variable".

Willmott (1987: 249)

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These ideological arguments have also been put forward by other authors (Allen, 1975; Clegg, 1975, 1979; Clegg and Dunkerley, 1979; Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980; Salaman, 1981) who represent the critical social theory school of commentary. Their position is not managerialist but rather neo-Marxist. They argue that the inherent conflict between management and workers is an expression of the primary contradiction of capitalist society. They argue that managers and business school academics are exploiting people, are agents in a capitalist game, and are sustaining an inappropriate, unethical, immoral power structure. They contend that managers should be made aware of these facts.

In the view of these writers, business schools take in dirty washing in the form of "untreated" industrial sociology, and implement a process of ideological purification which involves. *"... softening, whitening, blurring and misrepresentation"* (Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980: 539). What emerges at the other end is something called management theory which is taught to business school students and managers.

Many American writers have also attested that organization theory, as taught in business schools, operated as a servant of the status quo. Baritz (1975), Nord (1977) and Scott and Hart (1979) have all argued that it supported entrenched power interests, rather than acting as an objective and impartial field of research. Let us assess the specific criticisms made by these authors of allegedly "pro-management theory", and consider the possible implications of this for the selection of particular ideas for teaching.

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First, the aforementioned writers argued that what was taught was overly pre-occupied with the values of management and its definition of organizational problems. This argument reflected the belief that the subject focused disproportionately on matters such as staff turnover, morale, productivity and absenteeism. It addressed management problems while ignoring the study of behaviour in organizations as behaviour, irrespective of the effect that it may have had on managers and their problems. In addition, Weick (1979) claimed that the growth of the discipline of organizational theory had been stunted by choosing to work on problems which managers considered to be important, and by electing to use managerial concepts, rather than sociological or psychological ones.

Second, these critics felt that theories of human behaviour taught to managers assumed a unitary perspective. That is, they assumed that a community of interests existed between managers and workers. For example, the promotion of techniques designed to increase worker motivation such as job enrichment, was underpinned by the belief that it was to the advantage of everybody in the company that work motivation and employee commitment should be increased. While such a view may have been true for those in positions of power, it was not necessarily true for those without power in the organization.

The third criticism made was that organizational theories neglected the political realities of organizational life, and had failed to recognize the power motives and drives that dominated organizational leadership. The naivety of organizational theory had led to its failure to recognise that leaders often sought power for themselves and did not necessarily have the good of the company always as their focus. Theories which assumed the primacy of organizational benefit may have merely served the interests of the current power holders by masking their self-enhancing ambitions.

The fourth and final critique made was that organizational theory over-emphasised the value of the organization in contemporary life while under-valuing the individual. This represented a criticism of the notion of the organizational imperative which stressed the value of organizational goals above individual goals. Specifically, they said what was good for the individual could only come from the modern organization and hence all

employee behaviour must enhance the health of such organizations. The criticism was that organizational theorists had contributed to the growth of this view, and in so doing, they had bolstered and legitimated the actions of those who possessed the responsibility and power to manage organizations.

In terms of the implications of these substantial criticisms for the selection of management ideas to teach one can argue that pro-management theories would dominate within business schools. The most likely location for anti-management material (e.g. Braverman, 1974; Zeitlin, 1974; Hindess and Hirst, 1977; Storey, 1983; Storey, 1985) were it ever to be presented in a management department, would be in the full-time MBA programme, but most likely on an undergraduate programme. Considered in terms of trade-offs, it is likely that some business school academics would find such anti-management theories interesting, but would not necessarily extend that interest to teaching the ideas to managers on in-company executive programmes or to researching them.

TRUE VISION

Finally, some business school academics, perhaps those who come to teaching from a management practitioner background, choose to teach a particular idea because, from their practical experience, they know that it is appropriate and correct and therefore is one that they genuinely feel will be of great value to the students. The basis of selection in such instances is a profound and genuine belief that, "This has worked for me and it will work for you!"

The perspectives of those with such a pragmatic viewpoint would tend to avoid the more obscure and theoretical perspectives. They would stress the work of Stewart (1967) and Mintzberg (1973) on what managers do (their roles) and how they spend their time. Such ideas provide an enter into consideration of practical issues such as time management, delegation, communication, motivation and decision-making.

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Another favoured area of the academics would be the theories of leadership of Chester Barnard which stress the view of management as a technical function, reject any sort of employee participation, see management as a repository of special technical knowledge, and emphasise the essential need for leadership from the top down. Such military-based models in the 1980s are best represented by the work of John Adair (sometime Professor of Leadership Studies at Surrey University) and The Industrial Society.

CONCLUSION

It has been argued that the six popular management idea families fulfil many, if not all of the requirements which would motivate a business school academic to select them.   In Table 4.1, the main characteristics of each family of management ideas have been identified.

The major objective of this chapter has been to identify six separate hypotheses related to the researchability of management ideas, their interest, teachability, potential to generate consultancy income, instil a pro-management attitude, and offer true vision. These might explain why academics prefer some management ideas over others.

The overall theme of the chapter was to suggest that management academics act as the "gatekeepers of management knowledge".   These hypotheses possess varying amounts of explanatory power to discriminate between the management ideas as Table 4.1 shows.   The first three are relevant to all academics while the remaining three relate specifically to academics working in business schools or management departments.   The relevance of these variables differs with the target audience and the background and concerns of the individual lecturer.   Finally, it is anticipated that there would be trade-offs between the six variables. No management idea was likely to possess all the benefits and none of the costs.

Table 4.1:   Potential offered to business school academics by the popular management idea families.

IDEA
FAMILY   DIMENSIONS

	Research ability	Theory interest	Teach ability	Consul income	Pro mngt	True vision
Bureaucracy	X	X	O	O	X	X
Scientific management	X	X	X	O	X	X
Classical management	X	X	O	O	X	X
Human relations	X	X	X	X	X	X
Neo-human relations	X	X	X	X	X	X
Guru theory	O	X	O	X	X	X

X = potential offered   O = missing

In this chapter, the role of business school academics, as gatekeepers of management ideas, has been considered.   However, it was noted, that these academics have played a limited, albeit, important role.   The next chapter considers the more influential part played by companies in promoting management ideas, and gaining visibility for them amongst their potential customers.

CHAPTER 5

PROMOTION OF MANAGEMENT IDEAS

Introduction

Structuralization

Productivization

Marketing

Product development

INTRODUCTION

"What you're interested in, is how the one minute guru gets his ideas and turns them into a system of one minute guruship".

Dodsworth (1986b: 14)

This is the basic question that this chapter seeks to answer. How does the idea become transformed into a marketable commodity. Business school academics play a relatively small, but nevertheless important part, in bringing management ideas to the attention of a management audience. Of much greater importance now, is the marketing of these ideas by their developers and companies which sell the associated idea products. This chapter takes a marketing perspective and examines the part played by the product developers and marketeers in turning a basic management idea into a popular one and selling it. The propositions of this chapter are:

1. The activities of product development and promotion play a crucial role in transforming a management idea into a popular one.

2. The aforementioned activities can be effective only if the the management idea possesses innate characteristics which allow it to be transformed from a mental state into different types of physical products which can then be sold to and consumed by customers. The shorthand term given for this process of transformation is *productivization*.

3. There are four main types of management idea-based technique (excluding traditional consultancy advice). These are the **teaching device**, the **training event**, the **OD-type intervention** and the **system-wide programme**.

4. The four types of technique are not equivalent but represent progressively deeper and more permanant influences upon the organization. The term used to described this process is *structuralization*. Thus management idea popularity is partly a function of the degree of structuralization that it can achieve with a company through its associated techniques.

5. The adoption of management idea-based techniques is influenced by their active marketing. Of particular importance are the processes of **branding, promotion** and **product development.**

STRUCTURALIZATION

In his analysis of the labour process, Littler (1982) argued that industrial psychologists and sociologists had misconstrued the meaning and significance of developments such as human relations and neo-human relations by treating them solely as idea-systems. While Littler's argument was focused upon Taylorism, his general thesis has a broader relevance. He criticised Fox (1974) and Rose (1978) who (erroneously in his view) treated Taylorism as largely a managerialist ideology and as a way of understanding industrial behaviour. He argued instead that such developments should be considered not as discredited ideologies but rather as **forms of work organization** or **sets of principles underlying work organizations.** Viewed from this perspective, scientific management, human relations, classical management and similar

idea systems can be considered as significant sets of design criteria which are used to structure work. As such, they have continued to exert a major influence on managerial thinking and action right through to the present day.

Littler recommended that writers should relate structure to ideology. Instead of merely locating the management idea within a flow of ideas, they should consider other levels of social reality as well. A consequence of this conceptualization is the rejection of the notion that different management ideas can be treated as being equivalent and hence capable of being arranged along a single dimension. He wrote:

> *"There is little meaning in conceptualizing Taylorism, welfarism, human relations and so on as equivalents, as types of 'managerial philosophies' which succeed each other with the ebb and flow of history. The reason for this lack of equivalence is simple. All ideologies have structural implications, but some have more than others."*

> Littler (1982: 49)

Littler offered a three level framework which he termed the levels of structuralization. The first level was called **employment relations**; the second was **structure of control**; while the third level was **work design, division of labour and technology**. His basic argument was that those management ideas (or philosophies to use his term), which possessed the greatest number of structural implications and which also achieved widespread management appeal, had the greatest chance of progressing through the levels before finally establishing themselves permanently within the organization structure and its processes. While there was a tendency for changes at all three levels to go together, a management idea could be effective at the first level while leaving the other levels relatively unaffected.

Littler's contribution offers a useful way of thinking about the differing impact of the various management ideas and also provides a framework within which to examine the role of middlemen or entrepreneurs who disseminate management ideas through organizations. To do this however, it is first necessary to modify and extend Littler's original formulation to fit in more directly with the subject of this thesis.

Level 1:   Understanding

An innate feature of a popular management idea appears to be its inherent communicability.   This is the basis of any communication strategy which assists in the process of idea comprehension by a management audience. Thus the first level of impact is a mental one. That is, the manager should understand the idea (but not necessarily how it can help him to do his job better, or what he should do differently).

Most management ideas fail to achieve even this first level of structuralization, either because of their intrinsic complexity or because of the failure of their authors or promoters to communicate them effectively. The impact of the management idea upon its intended audience will therefore be either non-existent or minimal because it will have failed to achieve the first level requirement to be understood by managers.

Level 2:   Individual action

The individual action level involves the basic management idea being developed beyond the comprehension level of the manager,   into a set of propositions explaining how it can benefit managers and explaining how they should adjust their own behaviour.   The impact of the idea will thus be greater since a way will have been developed to "put knowledge into action".

Level 3:   Group action

Group action level penetration implies that the idea impacts upon a greater number of company employees because the behavioural changes that it prescribes are targeted beyond a few individuals to groups and teams. The idea therefore becomes more widely applied throughout the organization.

Level 4:   Organizational impact

This level of structuralization is achieved when the idea becomes institutionalized within the company as a whole and ceases to be dependent on the discretion of individuals or groups for its continued application. Such institutionalization occurs when the idea becomes incorporated into the planning processes, budgets, reward and review systems of the organization. Procedural proposals which are the basis of action have been found to be particularly valued by practitioners:

"Decision makers view research studies as more useful to the extent that they meet technical standards of research competence and suggest practical and administratively implementable action."

Weiss and Bucuvalas (1980: 251)

Assuming that the management idea possesses an innate potential to achieve the fourth level of structuralization, what factors determine the idea's progress through to other levels? In Chapter 2, a **management idea** was defined as a mental state of understanding (a research finding, theory, principle, tip, personal idea or saw). This was contrasted with the term **management idea-technique** which referred to a means which either assisted in the communication of the management idea or enabled it to be translated into action at the individual, group or organization level. Management idea techniques are therefore vehicles of idea transfer and are of four types. Each of the four levels of structuralization described earlier has its own associated management techniques.

To achieve the first level of structuralization, the production of a teaching device is important. Onward progress to level two necessitates the availability of a training event of some kind. Continued movement to level three requires the establishment of some organizational development (OD) type intervention targeted at a number of individuals or groups. Finally, the achievement of level four structuralization, equivalent to the permanent institutionalization of the idea in the company, calls for a long-term, wide-ranging system-wide programme based upon a re-appraisal of organizational functioning. The four revised levels of structuralization are shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: **Structuralization levels and their associated delivery modes.** (Modified Littler, 1982)

Level	Impact	Delivery mode
1	individual understanding	teaching device
2	individual action	training event
3	group action	OD-type intervention
4	organizational action	system-wide programme

This framework, based on Littler's ideas, provides a framework within which to examine how management ideas progress through the different levels. *Productivization* refers to the process of taking an idea relevant to managers, such as a theory or a research finding, and changing into a form that can be sold, and consumed by the organizational customer.

In particular, the framework permits the examination of the role of middlemen in the process of translating a management idea into a product or a service capable of being marketed, sold and consumed. Huczynski and Buchanan (1982) considered the relationship of those involved in management education. One can argue that the management wholesaler takes the raw material of the academic, consultant or hero-manager in a way similar to a dairy products company buying bulk milk from a farmer. That milk is then then transformed into a number of different dairy products. At this stage value is added and the products are destined for different markets. Figure 5.1. summarizes this relationship.

Figure 5.1: **Relationships in the generation and productivization of management ideas.**

Producers	Wholesalers	Retailers

academics   management consultants   managers
             gurus, OD staff, trainers
             → management academics   →
consultants

hero-managers

Consumers

shopfloor workers

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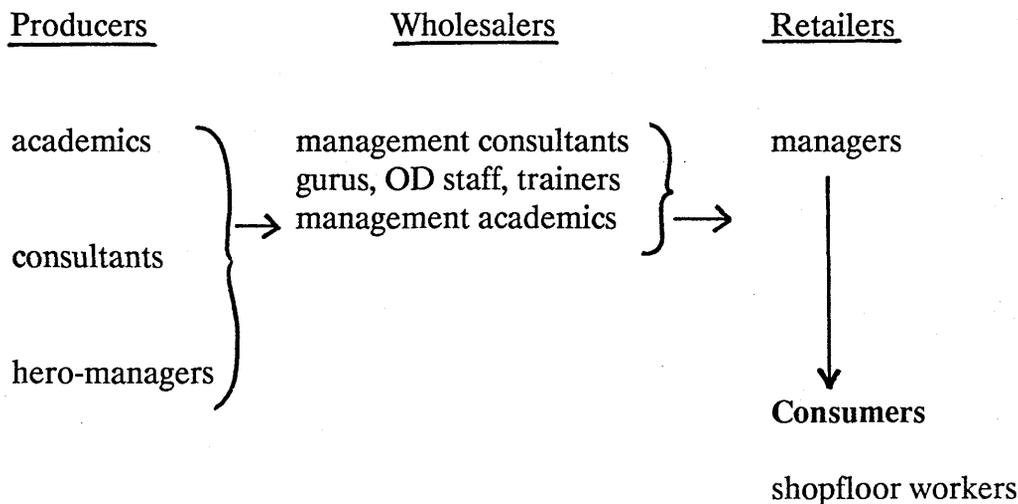
Many entrepreneurs have an idea which they turn into a product or service. Excluding traditional individual consultancy, four separate types of products can be distinguished. These are the **teaching device**, the **training event**, the **OD-type intervention** and the **system-wide programme**. Their relationships are depicted in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2.: **Range of products produced from the management ideas**

Raw Materials   Products   Retailers

- management ideas, e.g.
- research finding
- theory
- principle
- tip
- personal belief
- saw

* teaching devices

* training events

* OD-type interventions

* system-wide programmes

received on:
- courses seminars

Consumers

idea
received as:

- teaching aid

- management style adaption

- organization change techniques

296
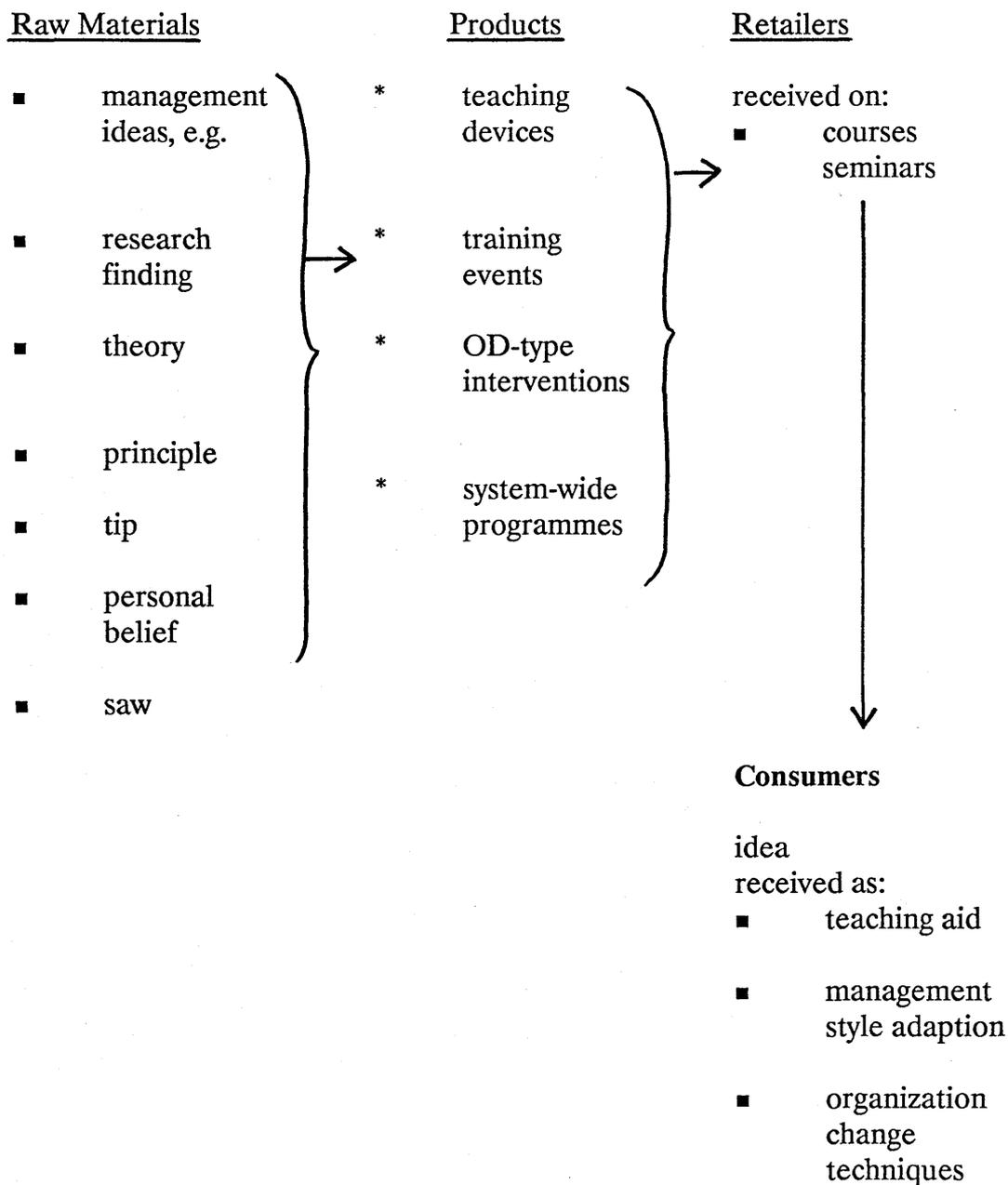
Teaching devices

A teaching device is an aid to help learners to understand a management idea. It is made up of a content element and a delivery element (teaching/learning technique). The device assists in the process of communicating the idea. At a basic level, each idea represents a conceptual framework which can be used for purposes of analysis. For example, a case description or a real life work problem such as lateness or absenteeism can be analysed using Herzberg's or Maslow's theories of motivation. Students use such frameworks to analyze the case situation in order to locate the causes and go on to make recommendations. The story description in the case represents the content element of the device, while the classroom case discussion constitutes the delivery element.

More sophisticated teaching devices might include a self-completion questionnaire (instrument) which would identify students' responses. The purpose of these teaching devices is to assist the tutor, involve the students and communicate the idea so that it is fully understood by the trainees. Training devices vary in their design and effect. Some are included in textbooks, student workbooks and tutors manuals and can be used free with no further payment. The widespread teaching of certain management ideas such as those of Herzberg and Peters have already been mentioned. These provide an opportunity for management training materials companies to produce, market and sell teaching devices based upon those ideas. Such teaching device packs include the instrument itself for the student to complete; background notes about the theory; comparative test scores, and a user's manual for the tutor. Such commercially produced instruments sell at between £5.00 and £15.00 per item.

Apart from instruments there are many other delivery systems or teaching devices. These include various kinds of aptitude, personality and vocational tests; case studies; training films; role plays; simulation games and so on. Over 300 have been catalogued (Huczynski, 1983). Figure 5.3b gives an illustration of the range of spin-off teaching devices for the Life Cycle Theory of Leadership. This theory was originally developed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard and since been re-named Situational Leadership Theory (LEAD).

The propositions of the hero-managers are unlikely to achieve even first level of structuralization. Some are "unteachable" in the sense that educationally there is little that a teacher can do with a personal anecdote other than report it. These types of management ideas are thus unlikely to progress to higher levels unless teaching devices are developed to assist in their communication. In contrast, the management ideas contained in Peters and Waterman's (1982) book on excellence have been supplemented with teaching devices such as video and audio tapes on the eight attributes of excellence; case studies of the excellent companies; and instruments to assess employees' perceptions of company excellence.

Training event

A training event is defined as a vehicle which seeks to put into practice the management ideas of an individual or group. Such an event may be run by the idea-developer himself, franchised by him to a training company, or may be developed independently by a company. The "skunk camps" described by Byrne (1986) were residential programmes run by Tom Peters's company and taught by him. During these seminars he conveyed the management ideas contained in his book, *"In Search of Excellence."*

A training event may be developed around research findings. The original research by Bill Byham on managerial careers led to the development of assessment centres. This work was later packaged into videos, workbooks, role plays and tutor's notes. Byham founded a company, Development Dimensions International (DDI), to market a range of off-the-shelf, ready-to-use management courses.

Perhaps the best known example of a management development programme based on a management idea is Blake and Mouton's Grid Management Seminar. Developed by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton, it was based on their theory of organizational effectiveness and change that appeared in their book (Blake and Mouton, 1964).

In order to be productivized into a training event, the management idea must contain a number of clearly defined elements or principles which are capable of being standardized, taught and franchized. Other examples of training events are the "One Minute Manager Seminar" and "Time Manager International".

Organization development techniques

While using the term "organizational" in its title, the majority of OD interventions seek to change individual or group behaviour rather than to tamper with the company structure, technology or objectives. The inability or reluctance of OD interventions to affect these aspects of a company is what distiguishes this third level of structuralization from the fourth. OD interventions are typically directed at work teams or entire departments. Perhaps the best known set of such interventions are those based upon neo-human relations management ideas. Developed originally in the United States in the 1960s, OD is now used as a generic term and has incorporated the Quality of Work Life programmes of the 1970s.

System-wide programmes

These are long-term, wide ranging programmes which impact not only upon people (whether individually or in groups) but also upon technology, work organization, financing, inventory control, reward systems and so on. Past examples of system-wide changes have included the implementation of Taylor's scientific management principles. More recent ones include the implementation of the "Deming Way" at the Ferraro plant of General Motors, and the attempts by various companies to apply Just-in-Time and Total Quality Management principles.

It has been argued that there are four levels of structuralization. Teaching devices, training events, OD interventions and system-wide programmes, all represent means through which management ideas can affect behaviour in

organizations and company processes. Table 5.2. gives examples of each of the main management idea families and relate these to the four structuralization levels.

Peters and Waterman's (1982) book, *"In Search of Excellence"*, has formed the basis of an incredibly successful marketing effort, and represents a case study in successful merchandising. Diaries, calendars, skunk camps, and television documentaries have flowed from it. Unlike for the consultant, the process of productivization for the academic involves him becoming an entrepreneur. Watson used the label social science entrepreneurs to refer to those engaged in such activities. He said that writers such as Gellerman, Blake and Mouton, Herzberg and Reddin were criticised by purists. He said that:

> *"... their work is designed to sell, whether in the form of books, management seminars, training films or consultancies. Like the task splitting scientific managers with whom they so passionately take issue, their work is reductionist, partial, evangelistic and sociologically highly inadequate on the explanatory level with its underplaying of structural, situational, cultural and economic factors. It is ultimately simplistic, by a judicious mixing of simplistic assumptions and pseudo-scientific jargon it has made itself highly marketable."*

> Watson (1980: 38)

Table 5.2:   Management idea families and their associated products

Management Idea Family	Teaching Device	Training Event	OD Intervention	System-wide Programme
Bureaucracy	Readings on Webber	Case	Role Analysis exercise	Organizational designs incorporating bureaucratic principles
Scientific Management	Assembly-line Production Game	Operations and Methods (OMM) Course	Time-and-Motion Study	Work simplification
Classical Management	Readings on Urwich, Gulick, Fayol	Organizational Charting	Management-by-Objectives (MbO)	Job definitions and descriptions
Human Relations	Teamwork Exercises	Interpersonal Skills Courses for Supervisors	Management uses formal organization to intervene in informal organization in order to create and sustain consent	Creating a sense of community in the workplace
Neo-Human Relations	Human Relation Experimental Exercises	Laboratory (T-Group) Training	Blake and Mouton's Grid Management	Job Enrichment
Guru Theory	"Pillars of Excellence" Instrument	Tom Peters' "Skunk Camp"	Just-in-Time (JIT)	Total Quality Management (TQM)

MARKETING

Productization takes raw management ideas such as research findings or theories and transforms them into consumable products. Once the management idea has been productivized, how can corporate customers be encouraged to buy it? It is at this point that marketing becomes important. Marketing has been defined as the process through which an organization matches its own resources with the wants of its customers (Wills et al. 1980). Reduced to its basics, successful marketing depends upon customers being aware of the products on offer; finding the products conveniently available (place); and judging the product attributes in terms of price and performance to be capable of satisfying their needs. Thus promotion, place, price and product represent the key aspects of the marketing concept of the "product mix".

To the potential buyer, these management-idea based products represent a cluster of value satisfactions. A customer will attach value to a product in proportion to its perceived ability to meet his needs. The predictability, control, social and personal needs of managers will be considered in the next chapter. Levitt (1980) argued that products were always combinations of the tangible and the intangible. They were often complex symbols denoting individual or company status, taste, rank, achievement, aspiration and even "being smart".

A product was a promise whose commercial substance resided as much in the proposer's carefully nurtured reputation (or "image") and the product's meticulous packaging, as in its physical content. Thus the product represented the total package of benefits that a customer received when he purchased a teaching device, a training event, an organizational development intervention or a system-wide programme. The remainder of this chapter therefore, focuses on three crucial aspects of marketing which appear to affect the popularity of a management idea-based device, event, intervention or programme. These are its branding and its promotion.

Branding

In order to be successful argued Levitt (1980), a product needed to be distinctive. Such distinctiveness could be achieved by product branding. A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, design or a combination, which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate them from those of competitors. A **brand name** is that part of a brand which can be vocalised, that is utterable. Well known brands include Coca-Cola and Ford. A **brand mark** is that part of a brand that can be recognized but which it not utterable. It may be a symbol, design or distinctive colouring or lettering. The Playboy bunny is a brandmark. Finally there is a **trademark** which is a brand, or that part of a brand, that is given legal protection. It gives the owner the exclusive right to use the brand name and brandmark. Thus the term branding is used to refer to the process of establishing brand names, marks or trade names for a product. One can find examples of branding in the field of training devices, management programmes, training devices and OD techniques.

Blake and Mouton's Grid Development programme is historically noteworthy as being amongst the earliest examples of brandnaming. Kahn (1974: 491) complained about this saying that their company, Scientific Methods Inc., "had registered the term as a mark or brand-name, the very anti-thesis of scientific conceptualization." Exhibit 5.1 shows some of the best known brands in the field of training events, and includes that owned by Scientific Instruments Inc.

There are numerous reasons for branding which Kotler (1980) has enumerated. These apply as much to management idea products as to other goods and services. A brandmark might be required for identification purposes or to simplify handing. Alternatively the producer may want to emphasize a certain quality level to protect unique product features from being imitated. He may want to emphasize a certain quality level in the offer and make it easy for satisfied customers to find the product again. Finally, the producer may see the brandname as an opportunity for endowing the product with an inherent superiority that may create the basis for price differentiation.

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Exhibit 5.1: Examples of brands in training devices and events.
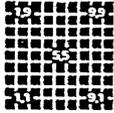
SCIENTIFIC METHODS, INC.
Box 195 Austin, Texas 78767, U.S.A.
Telephone (512) 477-5781 Cable SRD, Austin, Texas U.S.A.
Telex 776443

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP™
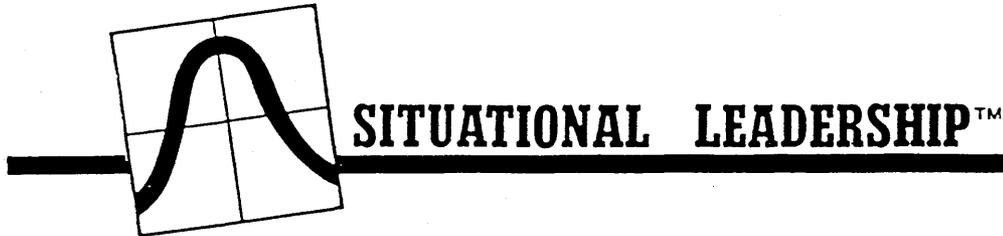
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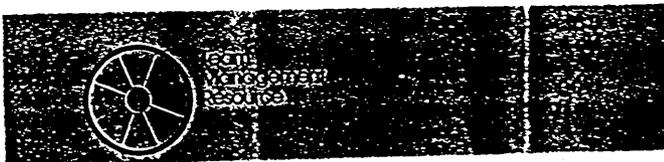
Ultimately, wrote Kotler, buyers may want brand names in order to identify the products that they want. The brand has an informational value to buyers by allowing them to shop in a market which has hundreds of different items. The brand serves as a useful expression for a whole collection of attributes and properties associated with a product and enables the purchaser to obtain products which satisfy highly specific wants without having to resort to a detailed description of them.

Kotler (1980) explained that in developing a brand, the manufacturer had to establish the brand's quality level as well as other attributes that would support the brand's targeted position in the marketplace. Quality was one of the major positioning tools of the marketeer. Quality stood for the rated ability of the brand to perform its functions. It was an overall measure which reflected the product's standing on durability, reliability, precision, ease of operation and other valued attributes. Individual brand names were expensive to establish and usually required a large investment in advertising and sales promotion. Why then has there been such a concern with branding?

Let us take the example of subject of leadership style. One can argue that all the major proprietary leadership training events are based upon the same generic product. Many writers consider the Ohio State University research studies on leadership that were carried out in the late 1940s and which produced the dimensions of Consideration and Initiating structure, to be the basis of nearly all leadership style training. These research findings can be considered to be an undifferentiated product (Bryman, 1986).

In the case of Situational Leadership, the function performed by the "subordinate maturity" variable in the theory, was to provide a focus that distinguished this leadership model from the many similar ones (Graeff, 1983; Nicholls, 1986). More often however, differentiation of leadership training events is achieved by having the developer-seller's name in the product title. For example, Adair's "Action Centred Leadership", Blake and Mouton's "Grid Management" seminar, Reddin's "3-D Theory of Leadership Effectiveness" seminar and Hersey and Blanchard"s "Situational Leadership" course all represent differentiated versions of this generic product. Their differences are sustained through branding. Let us now consider the promotion of productivized idea-products in a little more depth. An analysis

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of the way in which teaching devices, training events, OD-type interventions and system-wide programmes are packaged and promoted shows that they stress different features.

1.   Promoting teaching devices

These self-standing teaching devices are neither complete management training events nor OD-type interventions. Examples include role play exercises, videos and case studies. Their promotion is targeted at management trainers and lecturers. The advertising copy stresses a number of benefits which are similar to those one gets with ready-to-eat meals. It is upon these that the marketing effort can be concentrated:

(a)   **Ease of preparation**

The tutor can buy as many of these devices as are needed for the class. Little prior work is needed and orders can be phoned in.

(b)   **Professional presentation**

The device itself is professionally produced. The top of Exhibit 5.2 gives an example of the completeness of an instrument called POIS which is sold by University Associates. The bottom of the table contains part of an editorial from another catalogue of training devices sold by Organizational Development and Design.

(c)   **Guarantee of success**

Tutors are offered products which, "have been tested and which work". The experience of past users and the step-by-step tutor's guide all give confidence that the process will be successful.

(d)   **Ease of consumption**

More a feature of the content than perhaps the device itself is the ease with which the basic ideas can be depicted and presented. Four of the most communicable sets of management ideas (McGregor, Maslow, Herzberg, Berne) are shown in Exhibit 5.3. Each has had numerous teaching devices designed around it.

2.   Promoting training events

In Britain, to a greater extent than in the USA, theoretical ideas tend to dismissed. Indeed, sayings such as "only of academic interest" and "alright in theory but not in practice" capture the pervading anti-theory attitude. A brochure by the Career Track company assures the potential participants of a One Minute Manager training event that, *"You won't have to buy into any big theory".* The following is a description of a video-based training device which appeared in a Gower Training Resources catalogue:

"New supervisors almost always face a difficult task when they first step onto the management ladder. They need practical advice and guidance that they can implement immediately - and get results. The last thing they need is to have their heads filled with theories about managing people... [name of film] is a how-to film. There's not a management theory in sight - instead it focuses on a few basic skills that all supervisors need and can use. (author's emphasis)

Gower (1988: 9)

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Exhibit 5.2:   Advertisement for a teaching device.

(POIS)

David Kipnis & Stuart M. Schmidt. Kipnis and Schmidt studied the ways people influence one another upward, downward, and laterally in organisations. The result of their research is a *Strategic Influence Theory* that helps participants understand how they use influence in their organisations.

The POIS measures which of seven basic influence strategies—Reason. Friendliness. Coalition. Bargaining. Assertiveness. Appeal to Higher Authority, or Sanctions—participants use. . . how much they use each strategy compared to other strategies and other people. . .what they do when their "first try" does not get them what they want.

The three POIS instruments (Forms S, M, and C) can be used separately or in combination to focus self or group learning on how to be more effective in getting things done through the people who work for you, your peers, or your own boss. Or, the POIS can be used for diagnosing *patterns* of influence within a team, department, or organisation. Each form contains all instructions for self-administration and self-scoring, a profile of current *primary* and "*back-up*" influence strategies, and detailed information to help participants interpret their scores.

A *Respondent's Guide* containing extensive interpretation material is available to help participants fully understand their profiles and influencing behaviours and to help them apply *Strategic Influence Theory* to analyse situations and choose strategies that may work best.

Influencing Your Subordinates (Form S)

Profiles how managers and supervisors use influence with the people who work for them.

Materials for 10 participants
SOLD AS A SET ONLY
SEE QUANTITY PRICES

Influencing Your Manager (Form M)

Profiles how employees use influence with the people they work for.

Materials for 10 participants
SOLD AS A SET ONLY
SEE QUANTITY PRICES

Influencing Your Co-Workers (Form C)

Profiles how people use influence with the others with whom they work.

Materials for 10 participants
SOLD AS A SET ONLY
SEE QUANTITY PRICES

Respondent's Guide to the Kipnis-Schmidt POIS *

Contains important interpretive information to help respondents understand and apply their scores on the POIS.

Respondent's Guides for 10 participants
SOLD AS A SET ONLY
SEE QUANTITY PRICES

*Only one *Respondent's Guide* is needed for each participant even if all three forms of the POIS are used.

Trainer's Package for the Kipnis-Schmidt POIS

This packet includes the key element in this user-focused series. . .the *Trainer's Manual*. This essential tool contains everything you need to include the POIS in your programmes: Background and information to prepare your theory input and lecturettes • ideas and guidelines for administering, scoring, interpreting, and processing the information from the scales • guidelines for incorporating the POIS into existing programmes or designing a workshop around the instrument itself.

An excellent resource as well as an introduction to the POIS materials. the Trainer's Package also contains a copy of each of the age also contains a copy of each of the instruments—*Influencing Your Subordinates (Form S)*, *Influencing Your Manager (Form M)*, and *Influencing Your Co-Workers (Form C)*—as well as a copy of the *Respondent's Guide*.

SOLD AS A SET ONLY

Rollin Glaser
President
Organization Design
and Development. Inc.

Each time trainers stand in front of groups, they put their reputations on the line. "You're only as good as your last presentation," is an adage trainers are well aware of. Having spent most of my adult life as a teacher and trainer, I know the feeling. I personally want to communicate something of significance, get people to change their behavior *and look good in the process.*

That's our underlying motivation at Organization Design and Development. We want you "to look good in the process," while changing people's behavior and communicating something of significance! With that in mind, each item offered in our catalog is carefully tested and designed to meet those requirements. Our spring issue is fairly bursting with new and exciting components for your programs.

Exhibit 5.3: Examples of frameworks of popular ideas.

MANAGER'S THEORY

ASSUMED ATTITUDE OF EMPLOYEES TOWARD:	THEORY X	THEORY Y
ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES	Indifferent to them	Will work toward them if they perceive rewards associated with doing so
RESPONSIBILITY	Will avoid it if possible Prefer to be directed	Will accept responsibility if they are rewarded for acting responsibly Capable of self-direction toward objectives that are valuable to them
WORK	Dislike all forms of work Will avoid if possible	Consider work as natural as play if they associate rewards with working
REWARDS	Want money and security More pay will produce more work	Behave in ways that seek to satisfy a variety of needs
APPROPRIATE MEANS FOR DEALING WITH EMPLOYEES	Coercion, pressure, threat of punishment Well-specified tasks and close control Pay and monetary incentives	Establish a work environment in which employees can realize recognition, challenge, satisfaction of achievement, etc.

Theory X and Theory Y comparison
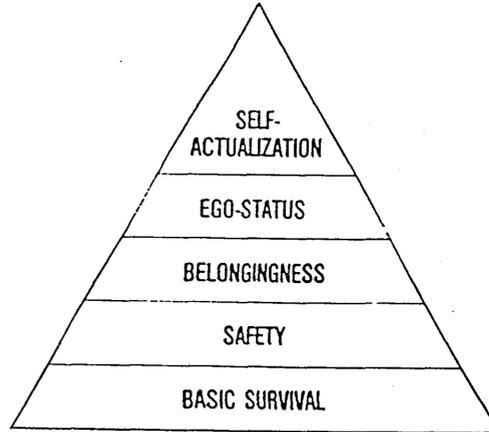
Maslow's hierarchy of human needs

MOTIVATION
(PRESENCE OF MOTIVATORS)

ACHIEVEMENT

RECOGNITION

WORK ITSELF

MAINTENANCE LEVEL
(PRESENCE OF HYGIENE FACTORS)

RESPONSIBILITY

ADVANCEMENT

COMPANY POLICIES

SALARY

WORKING CONDITIONS

DE-MOTIVATION
(ABSENCE OF HYGIENE FACTORS)
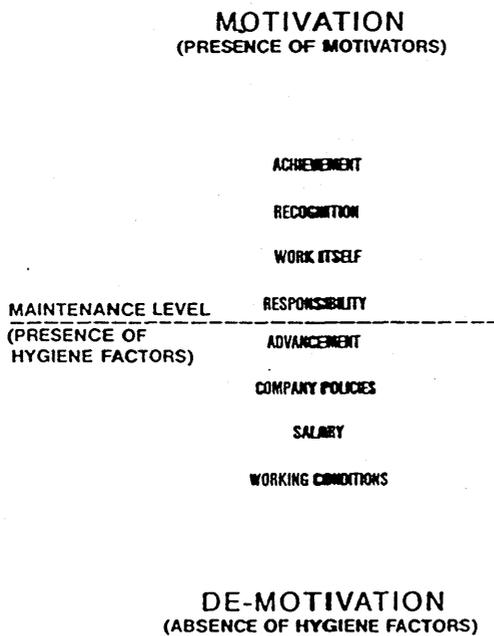
The motivation/hygiene concept
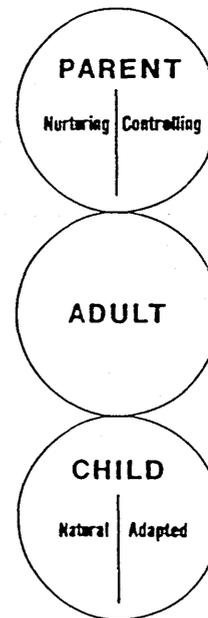
Structural diagram of Parent/Adult/Child ego states
(Adapted from Berne 1964)

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Thus an anti-theoretical approach to the promotion of the event would tend to be a marketing feature in the British context. The emphasis would be placed on "commonsense", "learning-by-doing" and learning from fellow managers rather than from "fancy experts". The American market could probably cope with a greater level of theoretical sophistication as the success of the Grid Management events and Situational Leadership Theory teaching devices show.

3. Promoting OD-type interventions and system-wide programmes

Since OD interventions sometimes snowball into system-wide programmes, for purposes of analysing how they are promoted, the two can be considered jointly. An analysis of the research and promotional literature suggests that the four following characteristics can enhance the chances of successfully promoting an OD-type intervention. The promotional literature should not stress a diagnosis of the customer's problem but should instead emphasis the nature of the solution being offered; it should explain that the customer has total control over the programme; the intervention should be presented as capable of being phased or limited in its application; and it should emphasise practice at the expense of theory.

(a) Low on customer problem diagnosis but high on offered solution.

Interventions and programmes represent not only benefits to the customer but are also alternative solutions to his problem. The customer will favour one solution over another. Some types of solution will be preferred because they will be better understood, be less risky, make the adopter look clever or whatever. One of the purposes of clear branding is to allow the customer to select his preferred solution. The recurring theme is one of giving managers control and choice. Indeed, Krell (1981) argued that the ability of a product to accomplish change or learning was secondary. What product design needed to emphasise in his view, was simplicity and ease of sale. Customers

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responded more positively when offered *results* rather than *processes*. Nevertheless, as will be argued, some aspects of the process also represent selling points.

Krell (1981) felt that interventions and programmes should look complete and be light on diagnosis. It was the purchaser who wanted to do his own diagnosis and who chose his preferred prescription or solution. They would not be buying it otherwise. For new producers, the ability to package and promote their interventions and programmes was likely to be crucial:

".. as a group of products which are close substitutes to buyers, available to a common group of buyers, and are relatively distant substitutes for all products not included in the industry."

Bain (1959: 110)

The individual consultants and consulting companies often have a preferred solution approach or a standardized analysis technique. Thus, customers can buy the type of the solution that they desire. Some may select an approach which differs little from the training events described earlier. One consultant may tend to see organizational problems as rooted in inadequate leadership and team performance. He will therefore recommend leadership training event or an OD-type teambuilding activity. Consultants often specialize and their specialisms are known to their customers. Other consultants may use a broader organization-wide analysis tool such as McKinsey's "7-S Framework" which is shown in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3:   McKinsey's 7-S Framework.
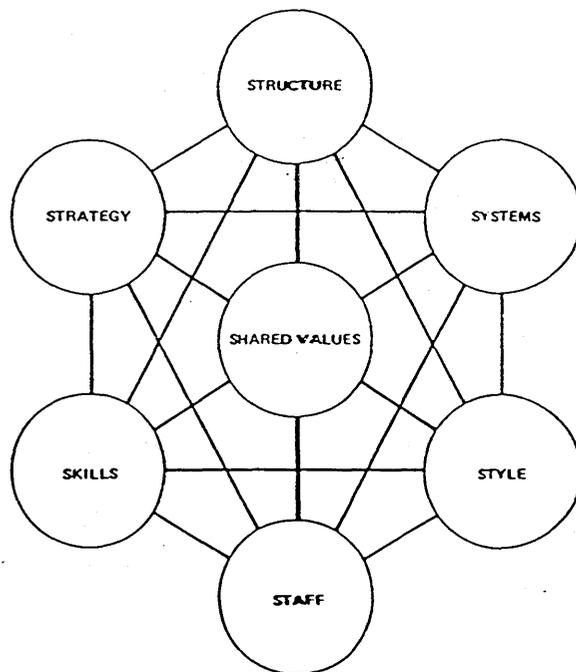
Consultants-as-wholesalers can increase the attractiveness of their offering by standardizing either the problem solution or the process of arriving at the solution, and frequently both.   Hill (1971) observed that an attractive package presented potential users with a clear and logical path to organizational improvement. In contrast, less structured approaches often appeared vague or risky by comparison. Krell (1981) attributed the success of Blake and Mouton's Grid Seminar to a number of these characteristics.

The Grid was an easily identifiable package which companies believed allowed them to buy predictable training processes and even perhaps predictable results! Managers felt that they know exactly what they were going to get in terms of content, how much it would cost, and how they could expect to benefit from it. Exhibit 5.4 is taken from a quasi-research article which acts as an advertisement for the Grid approach purporting to demonstrate its effectiveness (Blake, Mouton, Barnes and Greiner, 1964). It highlights the six phases of the programme.

Exhibit 5.4: Part of an advertisement for Grid Organizational Development
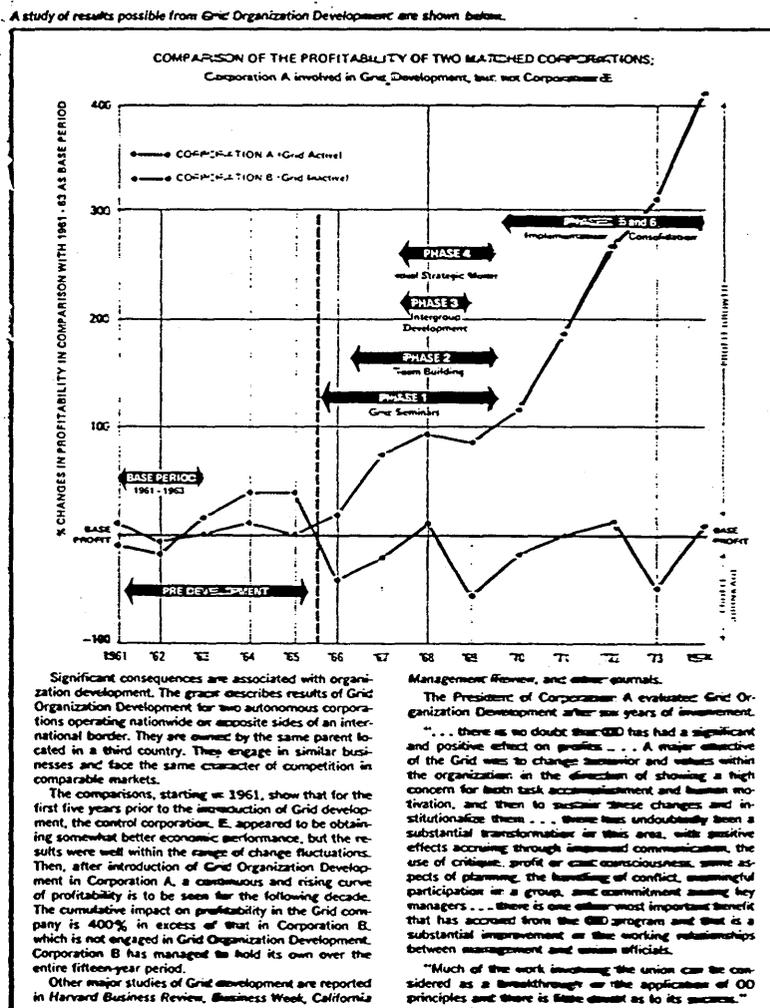
Source: Grid Management publicity document

(b)   **High on customer control**

While organizational development (OD) was sold in the United States on the basis of the need to incorporate humane values into organizations, the managers who bought it may have been attracted more by its promise of increasing organizational performance.   Krell (1981) cited the case of the American Management Association which offered a seminar on the topic of maintaining control over organizational development consultants. Companies even created in-house OD units to take over or oversee the work of independent OD consultants. Thus, from the marketing point of view, the aim was to develop a product which simultaneously met a company's need for improved performance, was in tune with the humanistic values of the period, and gave it control over the change process.   There existed a lucrative market for a product which could meet all these criteria.

(c)   **Phased or limited application**

Another attractive feature for the customer of many interventions and programmes is that he can buy as much or as little as required.   Warner (1984: 62) felt that the appeal of the Quality of Working Life interventions was that they could be applied ad hoc and incrementally.   Another appealing feature of any product was its reversibility.   The damage of an unsuccessful programme could be limited by aborting it and getting back to the point of departure without incurring any major costs (excluding the financial ones which were relatively minor).

Some employee participation programmes were not perceived by companies to meet this reversibility criterion.   While the consultants felt the company could return to square one, the organizations were less convinced and shunned many such programmes.   Kanter quoted a Hewlett-Packard manufacturing manager who described participation as, "*a lobster trap. Once you're in it, its hard to get out.   I'm saying it's worth it, but look at the risks realistically*" (Kanter, 1985: 241).

What organizations feared was buying an idea-technique which, if unsuccessful, trapped them into a fiasco. The manager stood to lose if a particular programme did not work, but has literally no choice but to remain fully committed to it, even in the face of failure (Staw, 1980: 74). Kanter (1985: 221) identified a range of other characteristics of innovations which, in her view, made them particularly attractive to potential buyers. These are identified in Table 5.3.

The well known marketing principles apply as much to the selling of these different management idea products, as to other products and services. First, whenever a market opens up, new sellers will seek to enter it. The market for devices, events, techniques and programmes appears to be virtually insatiable. The entry fee needed to participate is relatively low. It consists of a basic management idea which is capable of being productivized. Here one can draw parallels with dieting (F-Plan, Cambridge Diet), keeping fit (jogging, aerobics), parenting (Dr. Spock approach) as well as the fashion fields of clothes and shoes. These products and services often have a quasi-scientific basis and frequently are associated with a cult figure or a guru. The most successful authors and practitioners can become millionaires. Each product tends to focus on a single dominant theme such as fibre, meditation or exercise.

Second, there is the process by which an idea becomes established. Commenting on the promotion of a theory or technique, Gellner (1985) explained that at the start of its promotion, big "pump-priming" claims were essential if it was to take off. Once the idea become institutionalized, the vested interests connected with it, plus the overall impetus, acted to project and protect it. At this point, the intervention could downgrade or even disclaim any doctrinal pretensions. In the field of management, any technique that showed the slightest sign of success tended to be rapidly and effectively advertised by its consumers. In this way, in a short time, the "sacred fire" was stolen and spread through the hands of those who had seized it.

Table 5.3.: Characteristics of OD and system-wide interventions which give them "manager-appeal" (Kanter, 1985)

Aspect	Explanation
trialability	they could be demonstrated on a pilot basis
reversible	company could return to pre-experiment status in the event of failure
divisible	could be introduced in steps or stages
consistent	consistent with sunk costs and built upon prior resource experience
familiar	consistent with successful past experience
concrete	tangible, discernible
congruent	fitted the organization's direction
publicity value	offered visibility for company if succeeded

Third, one can note the importance of the role of "word-of-mouth" advertising. The problem of uncritical and indiscriminate application of management ideas is exacerbated, not only by potential customers actively seeking to make purchases of such items, but also by the predilection of successful users to do impromptu adverts on behalf of the management idea-technique and the consultant or consulting company which sold it. Word-of-mouth advertising appears to be an important form of communication in the decision to purchase management idea products. Preedy (1987: 21) put it thus:

> *"Buying consultancy is rather like buying a suit; you ask your contacts about suppliers, prices and quality, and you listen for satisfaction that seems to fit your need. You can buy off-the-peg solutions, or you can get them tailor made, but there are similar opportunity costs in both courses."*

Katz and Lazarsfield (1955) showed that personal influence played a major role in the adoption of new products. Dichter (1966) studied word-of-mouth advertising directly and focused on the influence of the recommenders. He reported that when consumers perceived advertising as not offering information and guidance, but functioning merely as a sales tool, they felt threatened, rejected it, and turned instead to word-of-mouth advertising. In this context, the potential consumer felt that the advisor spoke to him as a friend or an unbiased authority. In the atmosphere created, the potential consumer could relax and accept the recommendations.

Dichter discovered that while the recommender had no material interest in the product or service, he did have an interest in the **process of recommendation**, either in the talking itself or in the expected action of the listener. He identified four main reasons which motivated recommending speakers. The first one was **product involvement**. Here, the tension produced in the speaker by his involvement in the product was not eased by the use of the product alone. It required him to talk, recommend and enthuse about it to someone in order to provide relief and restore his

balance.   **Self-involvement** was cited as a second motivating factor in a quarter of instances reported by Dichter (1966: 150).   The product offered a means to allow the speaker to gratify certain emotional "self-confirmation" needs.   These are listed in Table 5.4.

The product could fulfil an **other-involvement** need in the speaker to give something to another person like a gift.   Finally, **message involvement** refers to the talk which is mainly stimulated by the way the product or service is presented in advertisements or commercials.   This is not necessarily based on the speakers experience of the product.

Table 5.4: Self-involvement: the most frequent goals of self-confirmation through talk about products and services.

Gaining attention: Introducing a product or service into a conversation can be a way of "having something to say".

Showing connoisseurship: Talking about certain products can serve as proof of being "in the know" or having refined judgement.

Feeling like a pioneer: Newness and difference of products provide the speaker with the opportunity to identify with them and their producers.

Having inside information: Some products/ services permit the speaker to feel clever, that is, to know "more" about them and their production than the listener is expected to know.

Suggesting status: Talking about products with a social status can provide an elevator for the speaker by which he can reach the level of the products and its users.

Spreading the gospel: Converting the listener to using a product can provide the speaker with an occasion to enlist the listener in a good cause, i.e. to spread the gospel.

Seeking confirmation of own judgement: The more people there are to follow the speaker's advice, the more justified he will feel in his own judgement. He needs followers to feel reassured about his own decision.

Asserting superiority: Product recommendations can be used as a tool to exercise power and assume leadership over listeners, and even as a test to determine whether the listener really respect the speaker ("Will he heed my advice?).

Once the management idea has been productivized. branded, marketed and sold, the seller has to decide how to update the product. The product has to be regularly updated otherwise franchisees will not want it. The need for this stems from the concept of product life cycle. In marketing, the product life cycle (PLC) theory (see Figure 5.4) holds that products go through stages of development determined by consumer demands. Five stages are identified and these are labelled introduction, growth, maturity, saturation and decline.

Marketeers have used the PLC concept to help identify where on the cycle a company's products are. It allows them to pinpoint those which need replacing, re-vamping, re-launching or discontinuing. Marketing writers counsel caution in the use of this concept and quote examples of products which do not fit the theory. Nevertheless, the PLC does offer a useful framework within which to consider a key aspect of management idea techniques.

Figure 5.4:   Product life cycle
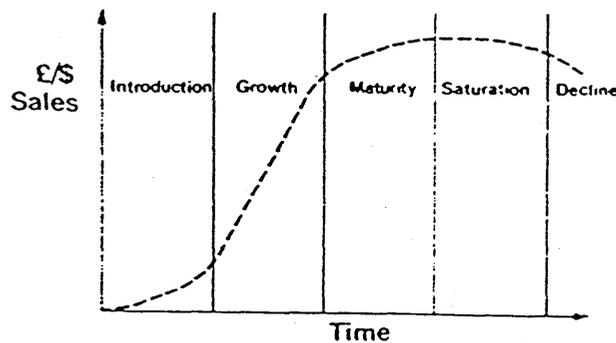
In using the PLC concept it is important to distinguish between the life cycle of a product **class**, the product **form** and the specific **brand**. This is because each one of the three tends to follow a different life cycle pattern. The life cycle of a product class tends to be longer than either the form or the brand. Table 5.5 clarifies the differences by comparing a tangible product with comparable examples of teaching devices, training events, and system-wide programmes.

Table 5.5: **Examples of class, form and brand in management idea products.**

Example		Teaching device	Training event	System-wide intervention
Product class	reprographic equipment	self-learning	leadership development	productivity improvement
Product form	photocopying	interactive assisted	survival training	productivity gainsharing
Specific brand	Xerox	Thorn-EMI Videodisc	Outward Bound Ltd	Scanlon Plan

Some management idea entrepreneurs have made use of this concept. There is evidence to suggest that they have analysed their product, the current market, the nature of the industry and the competition. There are a number of teaching devices, training events, OD interventions and system-wide programmes which were originally developed in the 1960s, and which continue to be sold in the 1990s. In order to discuss and illustrate these ideas systematically, it is useful to use Ansoff's (1968) product-market matrix which is shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6:   Product market mix and management idea products.

MARKETS

	Old	New
Old	Selling more to increase market share	Re-packaging of existing product to make it acceptable to new customers. Also franchising.
New	Product innovation or upgrade based on perceived customer needs	True innovation

(row labels on the left side: **PRODUCTS** — Old / New)

The matrix is helpful for organizing one's thoughts, although it is in fact impossible to divide realistically either products or markets into either old or new,   since both are frequently developed.   Hence there are many intermediate points along each dimension.   The four cells shown should be considered as extreme points of a matrix with numerous additional cells in between.   Nevertheless, one can consider each quadrant and give examples from the field of management idea-based techniques.

<u>Quadrant 1:</u>   <u>Old products in old markets</u>

This involves the continued selling of existing products to existing customers. The hope is to attract more customers from these old markets.

<u>Quadrant 2:</u>   <u>Old products in new markets</u>

In the management idea field, many developers use franchising. Franchising is a form of marketing and distribution by which one company grants another the right to use any tangible or intangible possession it owns for the purposes of trade, in return for some benefit.   The possession in question may be a patent, recipe, trade mark or business method which cannot be obtained without legal action.   For the grantor of the franchise, the benefit it yields is expansion for a low investment and the receipt of fees, royalties or profits. A franchisee can benefit from initial training, on-going support, and centralised marketing and purchasing.

Once the product has been successfully developed and marketed, it is available for franchising.   In the case of a management course, the first step is for the owning company to license the franchisee.   This may be a training company which will offer the courses under licence in one country, or it may be a manufacturing company which buys a licence to run a course "in-house". In the case of the former, the training company acts as an agent for the owning company.   Thus Adizes Institute in California licenses the Danish Management Centre to teach the Adizes Method for Synergistic Management.   Busvine Associates Ltd has a licence to run in-company and public seminars using Reddin's 3-D Managerial Effectiveness materials (see Exhibit 5.5).

Exhibit 5.5: Advertisement for a franchised training event.

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<u>Quadrant 3:</u> <u>New products in old markets</u>

Blake and Mouton's Grid Development events serve as a good illustration of the strategy of adapting an existing product to fit a new market. Their company, Scientific Instruments Inc. segmented its market for the Grid Management events. The original Grid event was undifferentiated. They must have judged there to be different markets or market segments which exhibited the same broad characteristics. These segments formed different markets which warranted the development or customization of the basic product. Exhibit 5.6a shows how Scientific Instruments Inc. segmented its market on the basis of management level and job. Thus, the first extension of Grid management event was from supervisors to senior managers, junior managers, salesmen, nurses, academic administrators, estate agents, and social workers

The second extension of Grid management events occurred not in terms of its content (management style issues applied to different groups) but of the instrument-backed learning device. These applications were to fields such as stress management, critiquing (feedback) and marital relationships. Thus, the teaching device used in the Grid Management events (i.e. the twin axis model plus the instrument) which previously had been the vehicle to convey the theory of leadership (the means to an end), now became an end in itself.

Grid Management events were originally launched in the mid-1960s. At that time, Scientific Methods Inc. saw the product in the growth stage, and must have worked actively to counter the usual pattern of decline and saturation taking place by introducing product innovation on a regular basis. Part of this is reflected in their publications stream which was concerned with re-vamping the basic Managerial Grid concept. The original book on which the Grid programme was based was published in 1964 and was entitled *"The Managerial Grid"* (Blake and Mouton, 1964). Four years later, the same authors wrote *"Corporate Excellence Through Grid Organizational Development"* (Blake and Mouton, 1968). This was followed by *"The New Managerial Grid"* (Blake and Mouton, 1978) and by *"Managerial Grid III"* in 1986 (Blake and Mouton, 1986). Similar companies, such as Kepner-Tregoe, have used the same approach (see Exhibit 5.6b).

Quadrant 4: New products in new markets

There are at least four major product invention strategies available to those who sell new teaching devices, training events, OD interventions or system-wide programmes in new markets. These are:

(a) **Guru strategy**: An academic, consultant or manager writes or ghost-writes a book which them becomes the basis of a product line which includes seminars, video and audio tapes, workbooks.

(b) **Research strategy**: The research and development route involves generating original, research-based management ideas and developing them into one of the four techniques.

(c) **Adaption strategy**: Taking existing management-idea based techniques (devices, events, interventions or programmes) adapting to them, and then selling them under your own brand name.

(d) **Development strategy**: Taking existing management ideas which have not been previously productivized to develop your own branded techniques.

(a) **Guru strategy**

The book is the starting point of the guru strategy. It has to be a best seller since this brings its author's name to the attention of a wide audience. The book alone can be a major source of income. *In Search of Excellence* and *The One Minute Manager* have sold millions of copies earning their authors large sums in royalties. The original book creates an audience for the public training events and products. These may be video-tapes or audiotapes which are sold as teaching devices.

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(b) Research strategy

An example of the research strategy approach to product development is illustrated by the original work of Kepner-Tregoe. This company was founded by Drs. Charles H. Kepner and Benjamin B. Tregoe and was based on their work on problem-solving. The approach was described in their original book, *The Rational Manager* (Kepner and Tregoe, 1965). During the 1950s both authors worked for the Rand Corporation in California on advanced airforce defence systems. Following a period of conceptualization, empirical research, testing and simulation, Kepner and Tregoe discovered fourteen concepts relevant to the process of problem-solving and decision-making.

After five years of work on this topic, the Rand Corporation did not wish to pursue this line of enquiry, and so the two researchers left the company to set up their own consultancy. They have developed programmes for senior, middle and junior managers, sales managers, supervisors and public sector companies. They train and license managers to act as course leaders to conduct in-house Kepner-Tregoe seminars and they monitor these to maintain standards.

(c) Adaption strategy

The adaption strategy takes an existing product or concept and modifies or replicates it so as to allow it to be sold as a different product. An example of this is the Team Management Resource. This is a teaching device and a training event. In the late 1970s, Meredith Belbin conducted research into the characteristics of teams which were most successful in business games. He concluded that teams whose members possessed certain complementary traits had the greatest chance of winning. His ideas were published in a book (Belbin, 1981) which formed the basis of a series of workshops on the subject organized by the British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education and taught by him.

Exhibit 5.6a: Product development of the Managerial Grid.

Exhibit 5.6b:

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP™
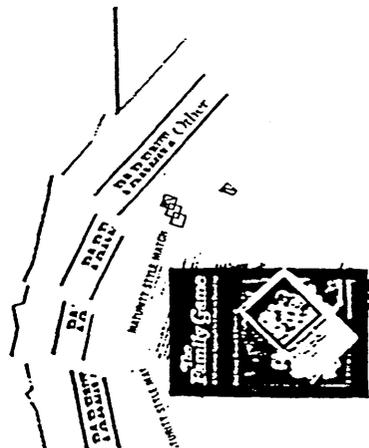
Situational Selling™
An Approach for Increasing Sales Effectiveness

Paul Hersey. By understanding—and applying—the Situational Selling™ model, you can develop the competencies necessary to be a true professional in a world that wants to buy and not be sold. The model provides a practical way to create sales and build the rapport necessary for strong and enduring customer relationships. Its diagnostic procedures and prescriptive actions prepare you to match appropriate selling behaviors with varying degrees of buyer readiness.

The model is both tactical and strategic. The "Client Interaction Competencies" provide a road map for successfully adapting selling style to the buying readiness of customers. When considering the joint marketing process—including establishing new products and services, forming buyers, obtaining commitments, and fulfilling expectations—the model serves a strategic function as well.

Situational Selling™ is designed to impact organizations in three ways:
• Increase sales
• Reduce turnover
• Professionalize the sales force

SITUATIONAL PARENTING

The
Rational
Manager

KEPNER • TREGOE

THE MANAGERIAL GRID

The New Managerial Grid

•NEW•
RATIONAL MANAGER

KEPNER
and
TREGOE
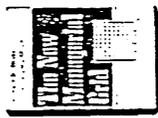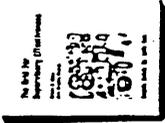
THE NEW GRID FOR SUPERVISORY EFFECTIVENESS (Scientific Methods, Inc.) summarizes the Grid for learning about styles of supervision. It helps supervisors at the first and second levels to increase their effectiveness. Available in Dutch, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, German, Danish, and Finnish. . . . . 151 pages

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The topic of complementary team member characteristics was picked up by the International Management Centres through their own product, the "Team Management Resource". The developers described how they conducted their own independent research. The "Belbin 8" model and the "Team Management Wheel" are shown in Exhibit 5.7 for comparative purposes. The Team Management Resource consists of a book ("How to Lead a Winning Team"); a teaching device (The Margerison-McCann Management Index); a training event for managers (based on the instrument and focused on teambuilding); and a training event for trainers (to instruct company training staff as to how to run courses using this approach).

A better known and equally spectacular product adaption concerns Hersey and Blanchard's "Life Cycle Theory of Leadership". This was re-named "Situational Leadership" and then acronymised to LEAD. The range of spin-off devices that it spawned once it was re-named are shown in Exhibit 5.8. Like Blake and Mouton's "Grid Management" programme whose approach (two dimensions and a grid) has been applied to other contexts such as marriage and stress management, the Situational Leadership approach has been extended to parenting.

(d)   **Development strategy**

The development strategy to new product development involves taking an existing but unproductivized management idea, and developing it into a teaching device, training event, OD intervention or system-wide programme. Two illustration of this approach can the given. The first involves a piece of academic research by Harvey (1974). This drew the conclusion that groups could often behave in ways that all its individual members opposed. He argued that it was both possible and common for groups of people to agree about something without knowing it and act as a group in a way which was opposed to their shared view. Harvey gave the label, "The Abilene Paradox" for this phenomenon. It has been developed into a video-based teaching device by a American management training film company and distributed in Britain by Gower Training.

A second example involves research into a procedure for disciplining employees in a manner which places responsibility on them to change their own behaviour. The label given to this approach is "Discipline Without Punishment". The original journal article on the subject was written by Huberman (1964) and subsequently elaborated by Campbell, Fleming and Grote (1985). The approach has been transformed into a a video-based teaching device produced and distributed by CRM/McGraw-Hill video. As a training event it has been re-named "Positive Discipline" and is marketed by Performance Systems of Dallas, Texas.

In conclusion, one can say that the promotion of management ideas, accomplished through the dual processes of productivization and structuralization, appears to be an essential prerequisite to elevate a management idea to popular status. This promotion has to be targeted at the needs of managers, and it is to this issue that is addressed in the next chapter.

Exhibit 5.7: Comparison of the Belbin and the Margerison and McCann Team Roles Method

Team Management Wheel
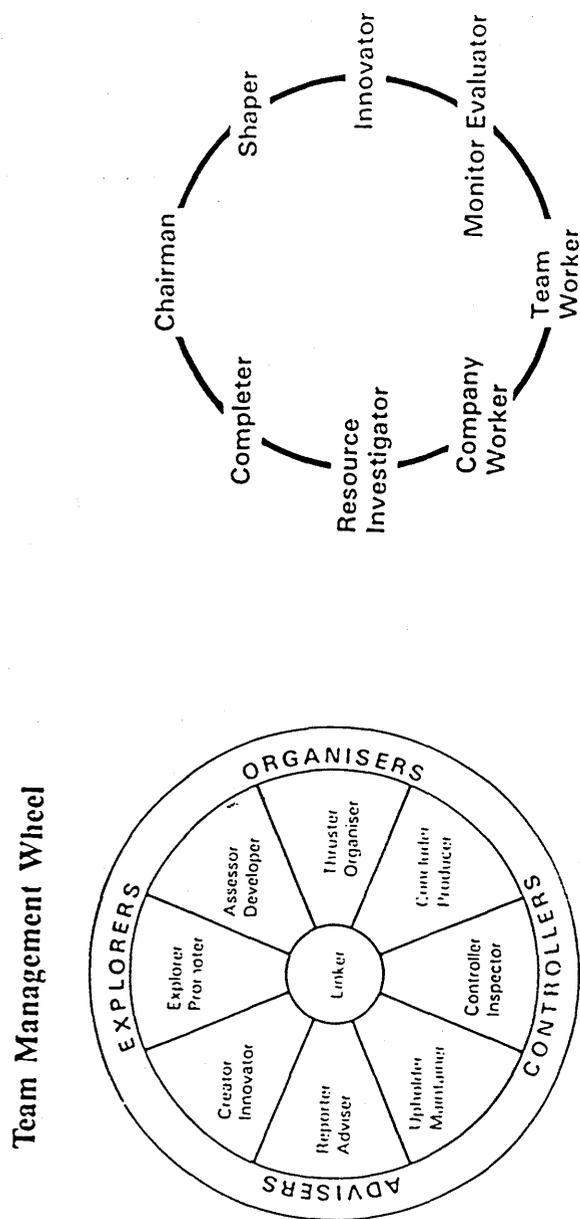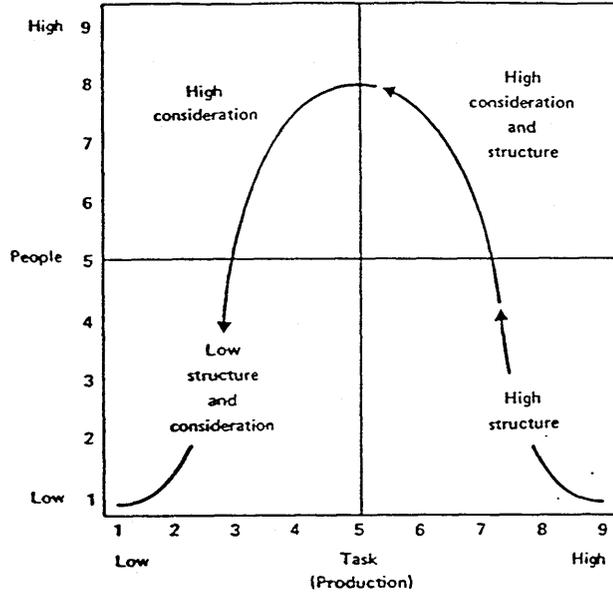
Life cycle theory of leadership

STYLE OF LEADER

MATURITY OF FOLLOWER(S)
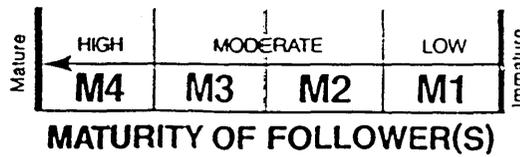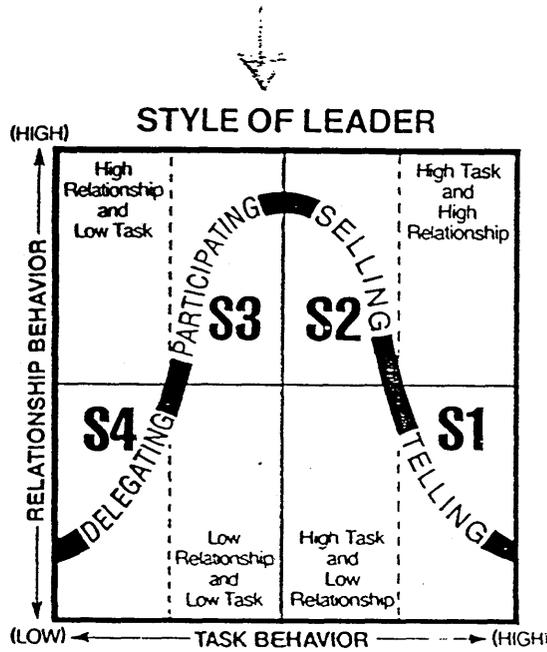
Situational Leadership

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP™

Power Perception Profile *

Paul Hersey & Walter E. Natemeyer. The Power Perception Profile provides leaders with feedback on their range of power bases, identifies the power bases that may be needed to maximise impact in that situation, and extends the Situational Leadership approach into the area of organisational behaviour. It is useful in generating data for teambuilding and project assignments. The PPP-Self explores perceptions of power while the PPP-Other provides feedback on leader's power from the perspective of subordinates' superiors or associates. The six-page Summary Handout examines the integration of Situational Leadership™ theory and power perception.

The Summary Profile Worksheet enables an individual to reorganise data gathered from the PPP in reference to maturity levels, and thereby to gain insight into the probability of success of various leadership styles and impact with people of varying levels of maturity.

PPP-Self / PPP-Other / PPP-Summary Handout
PPP-Summary Profile Worksheet

Maturity Style Match *

This instrument matches the manager's leadership style with a particular staff member based on that person's task-relevant maturity level. The Manager's Rating Form and the Staff Member Form help to determine the match between the style of the manager and the maturity level of the staff member.

Manager's Form / Staff Member's Form

Maturity Scale *

This instrument complements the Leadership Scales. It examines both dimensions of task-relevant maturity—ability and motivation, and provides leaders with information for predicting which leadership behaviours will have the highest probability of success in varying situations. Designed to be used in conjunction with the Leadership Scales, the Manager Rating Form helps examine the staff member's willingness and ability to perform tasks while looking at both psychological and job maturity in terms of the five basic components. The Self-Rating Form enables staff members to rate their own willingness and ability.

Manager's Form / Self-Rating Form

↑
**Use these two
scales together**
↓

Leadership Scale *

This instrument helps managers and staff members determine their perception of leadership styles and examines the two dimensions of leadership style—Task Behavior and Relationship Behavior. The Manager Form helps you as a manager to examine your leadership style with one of your staff members while the Staff Member Form helps staff members examine their perception of the manager's styles for each of their major objectives and responsibilities. Designed to be used in conjunction with the Maturity Scales.

Manager's Form / Staff Member's Form

(LEAD) Feedback on Leadership Styles and Instrument Rationale and Analysis

This booklet provides guidelines for giving feedback on the results of LEAD instrument scoring. Using these measurements as a benchmark, you will be able to select those areas which require special effort in the future to enable you to implement Situational Leadership™ in your business and personal life.

1 booklet

Situational Leadership Summary Handout *

This brief summary article on Situational Leadership™ can be used to reinforce the concepts learned from the film or readings and can even be used alone.

Situational Leadership Instrumentation Sampler

One each of the following is included: 215mm x 250mm Handout • 4-page Summary Handout • LEAD-Self and LEAD-Other instruments • LEAD Directions for Self-Scoring • LEAD Profile • Maturity Scales—Manager-Rating and Self-Rating Forms • Power Perception Profile-Self, -Other, -Summary Handout and -Summary Profile Worksheet • Maturity Style Match—Manager Rating and Staff Member Rating Forms • Interaction Influence Analysis • Leadership Scale—Manager and Staff Member Forms.

Interaction Influence Analysis *

Provides a means of systematically observing interactions between leaders and followers examining nine behavioural elements of communication.

Leader Effectiveness and Adaptability (LEAD) Instrument *

This instrument assists individuals in determining their tendency to rely on various leadership styles, provides helpful feedback on an individual's ability to change leadership behaviour when the situation changes, and provides insights into areas for self-development.

Designed to involve the participants in the learning experience, the LEAD-Self instrument provides feedback on an individual's own leadership style, style range, and style adaptability. Designed as a companion piece to the LEAD-Self, the LEAD-Other instrument provides feedback on leadership styles from the perspective of one's staff, superiors, and peers

LEAD-Self / LEAD-Other

LEAD Directions for Self-Scoring and Analysis enables the users to score the LEAD-Self or LEAD-Other and to analyse their scores in relation to the Situational Leadership™ concept. The LEAD Profile provides graphic feedback on primary and secondary style, style range, and style adaptability.
LEAD Directions for Self-Scoring and Analysis
LEAD Profile

Situational Leadership Handout

This smaller, 215mm x 280mm version of the Situational Leadership Poster gives a full graphic display of the Hersey-Blanchard model.

Situational Leadership Poster

This 635mm x 365mm full-colour poster provides an easy-to-understand graphic display of the Situational Leadership™ model.

Situational Leadership Film

This 16-minute colour film provides a clear visual presentation of the Situational Leadership™ model.
Purchase, Videotape/16mm Film
5-day Rental, Videotape/16mm Film
Please indicate videotape or film and showing date on your order.

Situational Leadership Simulator

This exciting, competitive training device allows people familiar with the Situational Leadership™ theory to use the concepts to analyse and diagnose a series of case incidents and to make decisions about appropriate style of leadership.

The Simulator provides an opportunity for two individuals and up to as many as 20 individuals (four teams of five each) to actively compete against each other to develop their diagnostic skills.

Includes 20 Situational Leadership™ handouts and summary handouts; two 32-page booklets (with general directions, discussions of the Situational Leadership™ model and its use, and an answer grid); two simulation boards; and sets of game cards.

One Simulator Kit

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CHAPTER 6

REQUIREMENTS OF MANAGERS

"Men are prepared to believe almost anything, so long as the belief can give them pleasure, excitement or confidence".

Rex Warner, <u>Julius Caesar</u>, Collins, 1970, p. 20.

INTRODUCTION

The two previous chapters considered the supply side of the equation. The first investigated what might attract business school academics to select to teach certain management ideas. The second examined how ideas and idea-techniques were promoted in the marketplace. In this chapter, attention is turned to the demand side, and in particular, to managers' needs for certain types of ideas and the techniques based upon them. The chapter presents three propositions and then goes on to examine the evidence for each of them. These are that:

1.   The nature and content of managerial work
      creates particular kinds of needs among managers.

2.   These needs are of two basic types: cognitive-
      intellectual and affective-emotional. The former can
      be further sub-divided into predictability and
      control needs, while the latter can be sub-divided
      into social and personal needs.

3.   Managers' need-gratification takes a number of
      different forms. One such form is the acquisition of
      ideas through the purchase by them of books,
      seminars, courses and consultancy advice. Another
      form is the adoption of the techniques based upon
      those ideas.

The different contexts in which academics and managers work, their different reward systems, and the different perspectives which each has on the same issue have been noted by commentators. Both Miner and Butler have attributed such divergencies to broadly the same causes:

"The role of the scientist requires that he recognize what is known and is not known in order to state problems for research. He must take every precaution to ensure that his findings, once obtained, are not in error. In contrast, the managerial role does not require the advancement of knowledge but rather the achievement of organizational task and maintenance goals. Time is often a crucial factor in decision-making. Risks and uncertainty are everywhere".

Miner (1978: 70)

"Managers make things happen, that is their duty. Management therefore attracts people of a certain psychological make-up who want to get on with the job of running their organizations and who therefore begrudge the time devoted to theorizing. In short, they are looking for a recipe that they can use with some assurance that it will work."

Butler (1986: 3)

The philospopher Alfred Whitehead described professional thinking as involving foresight and being based upon understanding of the things essential to the nature of the problem. Agor (1986) in contrast, showed that senior executives relied on intuitive rather than theoretical reasoning and often instructed subordinates to find data to support their "gut decisions". Lower in the organizations, the pressure to act undermined theoretical modes of thinking. Given a situation and the need to bring about the desired outcome, the manager was more likely to ask in what ways was this situation similar to a past situation that he had previously handled, and which had produced an outcome which met the requirement, than to consider the problem in depth and enumerate all the possible courses of action.

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Blackler and Shimmin (1984) explained how management researchers and managers perceived, defined and approached the same problems in different ways. Such differences, in their view, represented "... *contrasting institutionalized systems of values that are expressed in the criteria by which success and failure are judged and the associated behaviour rewarded or penalised"*. These points are summarised in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1:   Comparison of the value and problem-solving assumptions
of academics and managers. Blacklef and Shimmin (1984: 69)

	Academics	Managers
Value assumptions:		
Goal	Understanding	Accomplishment
Criterial of excellence	Validity	Effectivness
Application	Abstract/general	Concrete/specific
Problem-solving assmptions:		
Time perspective	Long-term	Short term
Methodology	Control inputs for valid explanation	Control inputs for effective influence
Viewpoint	Objective	Involved
A negative result is:	Information	Failure

The contrast is colourfully presented in Gurney's comment:

"Remember that the professor, the teacher, is paid to be suspicious, sceptical and argumentative.   That's our job ... And so when a businessman meets a professor, you can see the shutters go over their eyes and their eyes tighten as each faces his mortal antagonist; the man whose life depends on accepting assumptions up against the man whose life depends on questioning them. "

Gurney (quoted in Punch,1981)

Table 6.1 also illustrates that academics try to find data which will elucidate the problem under study in terms of an accepted, conceptual framework which will allow generalizations to be made from the results of the study. In contrast, the manager is concerned with short-term actions which will eliminate the pressing problem that he is facing, even if he does not fully understand either its causes or consequences. The academic obtains recognition from his academic peers who evaluate his work largely in terms of publications of various kinds. The manager is assessed on the basis of the results that he achieves which are seen clearly by his superior, peers and subordinates as making a contribution to the company's goals.

The consequences of this is that an informational gap has been created which has been filled by the management consultant. Thurley and Wirdenuis (1989) wrote that a management guru or a packaged set of principles and statements, was useful in legitimating strategic choices since managers needed support for their policy choices. They noted that "... *in European society there has been considerable distance between business leaders and intellectual leaders in the universities and professions. The guru phenomenon, in a word, is a response to the vacuum of intellectual debate on business policy. Managers and businessmen can look to their prophets and ignore the academic theorists and philosophers who seem at best disinterested in business and at worst positively hostile to business and management objectives.*" (p. 18-9).

The nature of organizational life and managerial work therefore represents the starting point for an analysis of managers needs. It has been studied both at the macro and at the micro-level. As far as the former is concerned, Hodgson (1987) identified five organizational pressures on managers. The most significant of these was the first, since many of the others stemmed from it.

1. The emphasis on short term profits, short term thinking fed by a fear of an unfriendly takeover and by a push from bankers and shareholders for dividends.

2. The lack of consistency of purpose to plan product and service that will have a market, keep the company in business and provide jobs.

3. The nature of the personal review system (evaluation of performance, merit rating, annual appraisal) for people in management.

4. The mobility of management with the stress on job-hopping from one company to another.

5. The use only of visible figures in management (e.g. sales, payback) with little or no consideration of figures that are unknown or unknowable (employee commitment or morale).

These factors naturally affected the way in which managers spent their time. This is a subject that has been extensively researched (Carlson, 1951; Marples 1967; Stewart, 1967; Mintzberg, 1973; Mintzberg, 1975; Kotter, 1982; Willmott, 1984; and Hales, 1986). The surveys reveal the pressures to which managers are exposed within organizations. Mintzberg (1973), for example, illustrated the large volume of work that they had to deal with, and its variety, fragmentation and brevity.

Managers had to make decisions based on incomplete information. The research also indicated the strategies adopted by managers to cope with their situations. It showed that they paid attention to gossip, speculation and hearsay in their decision- making, and preferred oral to written forms of communication. The research on the nature of managerial work also highlights other, deeply felt but perhaps less obvious needs. These are the **cognitive-intellectual needs** (for predictablility and control) and **affective-emotional needs** (to meet social and personal wants). These are summarized in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: **Managerial requirements**

	COGNITIVE INTELLECTUAL	AFFECTIVE EMOTIONAL	
UNDERSTANDING FOCUSED	predictability needs	social needs	EXTERNALLY DIRECTED
ACTION FOCUSED	control needs	personal needs	INTERNALLY DIRECTED

Cognitive-intellectual needs

A recurring theme in the social science literature is the search by human beings for **predictability**, understanding, order, and meaning in their lives. Predictability is an imprecise concept. It includes the search for cause-effect relationships, and for rules, procedures, and guiding principles. It includes the ability to make sense of the world in general and for managers to make sense of the organizational world in particular.

The opposite of predictability is uncertainty and chaos, and perhaps most importantly, lack of **control**. The goal of controlling one's life in general, and one's work life in particular, is widely sought but rarely attained. When for example, one's future is dependent on the performance of other people. such as subordinates. The predictability sought is provided by belief systems, models or mind-maps which, in the case of managers, can be obtained from management ideas. These ideas can be complemented with techniques which

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claim to help managers exercise such controls. Predictability focuses on understanding while control involves, "doing with understanding". Hence the former is a passive requirement while the latter is an active one. The two are closely related, both concern the cognitive needs of managers.

Affective-emotional needs

The right hand side of Table 6.2 deals the affective or emotional needs. These can be related to Maslow's (1943) general category of self-esteem needs. Maslow divided this category into two dimensions. The first were the externally-directed **social** needs. These concerned themselves with how the individual felt that other people viewed him, that is, the esteem he was accorded by others. Dimensions such as reputations, prestige, recognition, attention, importance, appreciation and legitimation were described by Maslow.

There was a second aspect of self-esteem which was internally-directed and which focused on an individual's **personal** feelings about himself. The relevant dimensions proposed by Maslow were strength, achievement, adequacy, confidence and independence. Issues here related to a individual gaining reassurance or re-affirmation about his own view of himself. This was particularly relevant if, for some reason, such personal worth was challenged.

If these two families of needs do exist, then they can be met in different ways. For example, in the way in which managers choose to interact with their juniors, colleagues and bosses; and the way in which they organize their work, allocate their time and structure the organization. Another way of meeting these needs is through the application of management ideas and associated techniques. The argument of the chapter is that it is possible to explain managers' acquisitions of ideas in the form of purchases of certain books, courses, programmes, conferences and management techniques in terms of the perceived ability of these to meet one or more of the four types of needs identified here. The next task therefore, is to examine the evidence for the existence of these needs.

PREDICTABILITY NEEDS

It is argued that management ideas are one of the ways in which managers can gratify their need for predictability within the organizational context. These ideas can give meaning to the work that managers' do and help them understand their work environment. Peters and Waterman (1982) wrote that we all need meaning in our lives and will sacrifice a great deal to institutions that will give it. At the same time, as individuals, we seek independence, and want to feel that we are in charge of our lives and are in some way different from other people.

Berger and Luckman (1967) argued that like all species, humans had a need for an ordered, patterned way of life. Since neither biology nor environment pre-determined the form that this would take, human beings constructed a world of their own and carefully sought to maintain it against disruption and uncertainty. Modern society, wrote Luckmann (1978: 74), *"confronts the individual with an ever-changing kaleidoscope of social experiences and meanings"* and forces him to make choices, decisions and plans in order to cope with them. At the same time, this experience of variety and diversity undermined any feeling of certainty since *"what is truth in one context of the individual's social life many be error in another"* (Luckmann 1978: 165). This placed an immense burden on the individual. Unlike previous eras, there was now no common religion to provide an overarching framework of meaning which put everything into perspective.

Becker (1973) wrote about the basic tendency of the human species to seek predictability and the comfort of taken-for-granted assumptions about their world and their circumstances. Human beings looked to their culture to help them with the "problem of meaning". On their own, they were unable to make meaningful analyses of the potentially chaotic world in which they had to exist. Hence, they were forced to depend on the meanings made available to them in the social world of which they were a part. Although as individuals, we might want to be autonomous and independent, we could not cope psychologically with a permanent engagement in critical questioning, analysis of alternatives, and the working out of the full implications of every act.

This problem of ambiguity is present at all levels of the organization and has been discussed by different authors. Explaining the function of "bull" in the armed forces, Dixon (1976: 186) argued that it exemplified the general principle which was common to all organisms, namely that of **combating randomness.** The argument was that living organisms were complex patterns which existed within the essential disorder from which they came and to which they would return. The pattern endeavoured to maintain itself in being and there existed regulators, controls and constraints which functioned to preserve that pattern. They maintained purity and separateness. Dixon (1976) argued that life could be construed as a fight for orderliness in the cause of which both voluntary and involuntary behaviour was directed.

According to this theory of entropy reduction, the attraction to and belief in a particular management idea represented a general and necessary propensity on the part of the manager to resist randomness. These management ideas contained within themselves "theories of the world" which were relatively simple and amenable to control by their users. Other aspects of the organization complemented the process of randomness reductions. For example, maintaining uniformity by written and spoken instructions; clear job descriptions; unambiguous statements of responsibilities depicted in organizational charts; preserving the hierarchy in the company; preserving status differences; separating managers from workers; and delineating what was and was not appropriate behaviour for every situation.

Gellner (1985: 31) argued that with the advent of our affluent industrial society, we no longer feared hunger or accidents. Such security had diminished religious activity. Nevertheless, terror was present in modern affluent societies in the form of disorientation which was variously labelled as alienation and anomie. These distortions contained three important elements:

(a)   The replacement of a material environment by a
        social environment consisting of people and not
        things.

(b)   The instability or unreliability of this human-
        social environment with uncertainty prevailing.

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(c)   The lack of any widely shared or seriously accepted ideology or vision which decreed how things should be arranged.

In organizations, it was <u>people</u> who featured prominently in managers' work environments, especially at the lower organizational levels. It was they who could make-or-break his life. Thus the manager was not so much at the mercy of natural forces as at the mercy of people. Cleverley's (1971) argument was that a manager's environment was made up basically of relationships with others, and this was the main source of uncertainty for the majority of managers.   Management was "getting things done through people" but managers reported that, in terms of workplace behaviour, people were a volatile and unpredictable commodity through which managers had to function. He noted that:

"In the entire environment that surrounds the manager, the most unpredictable, least understood and least controllable factor is the behaviour of the people he manages. Not surprisingly therefore, the subject is shrouded in mystique."

Cleverly (1971: 96)

During the last thirty years, management thinking had become greatly interested in developing sophisticated systems for managing people successfully. These have sometimes been referred to as "paper panaceas".   This obsession, may be the product of a deficiency in management culture in which there is no concern about people until they become a problem.   As soon as a people-problem occurs, the tendency is either to throw money at it (short term expedient solution), to search for a magic wand (the new system), or to react (in a war-like mode) to pressure from the trade union to resolve the matter.

People were seen as irrational and hence not susceptible to the organization's logical control systems.   It was not so much that human irrationality reduced the effectiveness of the control systems, but rather that it led to the search for "management magic" as employees followed their own rationalities as well as

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those of the organizers (Watson,1986: 31).   These two sets of rationales did not coincide for much of the time.   Watson went on to argue that independent-mindedness and the sheer unpredictability of human beings produced a strong and widespread inclination by managers to resort to magic, myth, panaceas and more generally, to the mystification of the very idea of "management".

The realm of human relationships has taken over the great load of anxiety and precariousness which the natural world once produced.   Gellner (1985) argued that this world conveyed lurking danger and fatality.   It could not be apprehended or controlled by rational or intelligible methods which worked. In the sphere of human relations, the manager stood to lose most and hence feared it most.   The popular self-help magazines in psychology promised to allay such anxieties, as did certain people-management ideas.   Most of these did not contain any genuine knowledge or information which was not available to commonsense.

Gellner's main point was that in their interactions, managers did not feel that there was a total randomness about them.   They did get a sense of some "tight pattern".   The social experiences of people did have a feeling of some hidden logic about them.   However, attempts to seize, capture and utilize this logic usually failed.   People found it impossible to remain passive in the face of this acute and recurrent anxiety, said Gellner, which emanated from the sphere of human relationships management.

For white collar and managerial groups, optimal human relations within organizations have become the very centre of their lives.   It is here that happiness or misery is decided. At the same time, these relationships were seen as menacing, incomprehensible and uncontrollable.   The great philosopher, David Hume (1757) wrote that:

"In proportion as any man's course of life is governed by accident, we always find that he increases in superstition; as may particularly be observed of gamesters and sailors".

How can such fears be faced? The manager experiencing the stressful situation can turn to available respected knowledge for guidance. However, the abstract, individual-disregarding and conjectural nature of much of academic social science is unsuited to managers with acute and specific problems. The empirical theory of knowledge gives much of psychology its anaemic character. Managers' fears are rarely calmed by traditional social science. They therefore seek relief from anxieties from other areas. Dubin (1976: 22) wrote:

"We live in a highly secular world. The morality of the Judeo-Christian tradition is no longer the consensual boundary within which practical decisions are taken in the operation and management of work organizations. Secular man, even though he is an executive and decision-maker, is very much in need of moral guidelines within which to take his decisions ... Today's rational decision-makers avidly seek moral justification for their actions and are only too ready to see the new morals in the scientific theories of applied behavioural scientist ... Once this phenomenon is recognized, it becomes easier to understand how simple theories can often be widely accepted by practitioners at the very moment that they come under questioning and dispute amongst scientists."

Miner (1982) argued that many managers had turned to science for moral guidelines as the Protestant ethic declined in significance. Religions provide their adherents with simple guidelines (10 commandments; mortal and venial sins). In the same way, the popular management ideas offered their followers simple directions for actions together with an appended social philosophy as Exhibit 6.1 shows. The latter related to the nature of man who was seen as fundamentally bad or irrational (scientific management and human relations) or fundamentally good (neo-human relations and guru theory). Rather like readers choosing the newspapers which reflect their political opinions, managers can choose the ideas which most closely reflect their attitudes. Miner saw these management ideas as being similar to religions but possessing the added sanctions of science.

Exhibit 6.1: Examples of guru guidelines offered to managers.

Peters and Waterman (1982)
Eight Principles for Excellence

One: A bias for action: a preference for doing something-anything-rather than sending a question through cycle and cycles of analyses and committee reports.

Two: Staying close to the customer—learning his preferences and catering to them.

Three: Autonomy and entrepreneurship—breaking the corporation into small companies and encouraging them to think independently and competitively.

Four: Productivity through people—creating in all employees the awareness that their best efforts are essential and that they will share in the rewards of the company's success.

Five: Hands-on, value driven—insisting that executives keep in touch with the firm's essential business.

Six: Stick to the knitting—remaining with the business the company knows best.

Seven: Simple form, lean staff—few administrative layers, few people at the upper levels.

Eight: Simultaneous loose—tight properties—fostering a climate where there is dedication to the central values of the company combined with tolerance for all employees who accept those values.

Clifford and Cavanagh (1985)
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF
HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS

The Wisdom of the Seventies	The New Tradition
To outpace the economy in sales and profit growth, you'd better find the most fashionable and rapidly expanding industries.	It doesn't matter. There are winners in every sector—doughnuts, glue, and textiles as well as software, health care, and telecommunications.
Size is just as important as sector. Find and penetrate the biggest markets.	You're better off if you create and develop niches.
Achieve economies of scale by moving down the experience curve.	Create new experience curves through innovation. Let competitors work their way down the ones you just made obsolete.
Low price yields high share.	Value wins.
A. Find a good business and stay with it B. Diversify. Become a conglomerate.	Don't stay where you are but don't go everywhere, either. Edge out—into related products or related markets or both.
Your employees are bureaucrats, waiting to be told what to do—so tell them	Give your employees values and a vision. Make them shareholders: They will behave like owners because they are owners.
The company's mission is to create wealth for shareholders.	The company's mission is to create an institution, leave a legacy, make a difference. Well managed, the company will create wealth as a by-product.
If it ain't broke, don't fix it.	Fix it or it will break.
Successful executives are cool, rational, professional managers.	Successful leaders are obsessed with the business. Justifiably, they have at least as much faith in their own instinct and intuition as they do in facts and analyses.
Successful companies are run by quirky entrepreneurs who are disorganized and undisciplined.	Successful companies are run by people who have their priorities straight, their values clear, their direction right, and a strong grasp of the culture.

Deming's fourteen points . . .

1 Create constancy of purpose toward improvement of product and service, with the aim to become competitive and thus to stay in business, and to provide jobs.

2 Adopt the new philosophy. We are in a new economic age. We no longer need to live with commonly accepted delays, mistakes, defective materials and defective workmanship.

3 Cease dependence on mass inspection to achieve quality. Require instead statistical evidence that quality is built in.

4 End the practice of awarding business on the basis of price tag alone.

5 Improve constantly and forever every activity in the company, to improve quality and productivity, and thus constantly decrease costs.

6 Institute modern methods of training and education on the job, including management.

7 Institute supervision. The aim of supervision should be to help people and machines and gadgets to do a better job.

8 Drive out fear, so that everyone may work effectively for the economy.

9 Break down barriers between departments.

10 Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the workforce asking for zero defects and new levels of productivity. Such exhortations only create adversarial relationships, as the bulk of the causes of low quality and low productivity belong to the system and thus lie beyond the power of the workforce.

11 Eliminate work standards that prescribe numerical quotas for the day. Substitute aids and helpful supervision, using the methods to be described.

12 a) Remove barriers that rob the hourly worker of his rights to pride of workmanship. The responsibility of supervisors must be changed from sheer numbers to quality. b) Remove the barriers that rob people in management and in engineering of their right to pride of workmanship. This means, inter alia, abolishment of the annual or merit rating and of management by objective

13 Institute a vigorous program of education and retraining.

14 Create a structure in the company that puts everyone in the organisation to work at company-wide quality improvement.

Deming (in Hodgson: 1987)

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Ashworth (1980) felt that the gap created by the demise of traditional religion had been filled by popular science. This consisted of writings on the occult, UFOs, spoon-bending and so on. These satisfied readers' needs for an orderly social world. Ashworth studied the content of such writings and their relationship to other bodies of knowledge. He viewed knowledge and beliefs as part of the human mind's innate propensity to combine opposing categories and ideas into understandable structures. These formed myths or stories which we told ourselves about the world in order to explain it. Popular science began where religion and science ended, claimed Ashworth. It overcame the deficiencies of the two for the individual by resolving them into a hybrid which provided a satisfactory social myth.

Dealing with information overload

Predictability is also challenged by the confusion and chaos that surrounds us. We cannot cope with all the available information since we lack the cognitive capacity to do all the calculations and make a decision. It was Drucker who noted that the reduction of complex business problems to a small number of seemingly practical actions was attractive to American managers. Human rationality was bounded and we had to resign ourselves to living with a certain degree of ambiguity, and accepting compromise that followed from the realities of unclear criteria, inadequate knowledge and the vagaries of chance and unintended consequences.

Naisbitt (1982) in his analysis of global trends, noted the proliferation of variety in everything from foods to religious cults. Neal and Groat (1984) felt that solid facts, as Naisbitt presented them, could be more appropriately viewed as a personal exercise in the "social reconstruction of reality". These writers suggest that the appeal of Naisbitt's book, *"may very well stem from readers' encounters with the complexity of the world, the quest for collective identity and the desire for re-assurance."* (p.121).

Berg and Smith (1987) discussed retail sales and argued that the shopper had so many options to choose from that he could hardly stand the process of having to decide. The variety on offer, with all its intricate trade-offs, created such a a paralysis for the consumer that any solid system of dogma that could simplify

and provide an authoritative base for deciding, felt like liberation. In the context of the organizational world, the "Deming Way" or the "Management Grid Approach" can be seen as providing such a unified set of principles which could guide managers through the numerous choices or might even make choosing unnecessary. One might argue that the reliance on a single authority (a management guru) in the light of massive ambiguity of options, represented another response to variety "gone mad". Perhaps there may be a social link between the emergence of dogma and the proliferation of variety.

Managers rarely possess the requisite insight to know the meaning of choosing one option rather than another. There was therefore anxiety associated with keeping so many options open. This could propel them into choosing a collectivist solution. By following others and emulating what others did, one could both reduce the burden of choice, and dissipate the responsibility for failure.

Anthony (1987: 258) argued that in the field of complex social interactions there was little theory at any level of generalization that had a predictive value. Paradoxically, the more responsible and influential the general manager became, there was:

> "... *precious little theory to help him cope with confusion and complexity. What is available to him is a ready battery of consultants' advice, of educational programmes compounded of recipes and simplifications, distillations of general explanations of human behaviour, catalogues of the best way to "handle" people, select them, promote them, motivate and control them. None of these may relate to the constantly shifting situation and the arcane complexities that confront him, but the advice is to hand, it is simple, it provides comfort, and above all it is appropriate to his understanding.*"

What happens when there is a pressure to decide but a lack of available guidance? Ambiguity like pain, is not a comfortable situation. Thus, any opportunity to obtain relief, even if temporary, would be welcomed and grasped. Hence managers could be expected to be attracted to ideas and

techniques which could help them to understand their situations better, reduce the ambiguity and feelings of helplessness, and offer them potential control over a turbulent environment. The literature on the organizational world is full of references to insecurity and fear, and as containing ill-understood forces. Barsoux (1989: 128) stated that, for British managers,

"The outcome of any managerial decision is often seen as a lottery, and the manager as the hapless victim of turbulent economic forces. Many managers seem to accept that they are lurching rudderless through life both professionally and in private."

Being vulnerable, the manager invents myths, establishes creeds and clings to rituals so as to avoid the "dark inhumanity of randomness and chance". One can understand the reluctance of managers to give up past management ideas which have offered them some respite from the stress induced by chaos. Child (1969a: 205) wrote that:

"The manager's life has become much more complicated as the result of his dependence on psychologists and sociologists because he is constantly being told about the unreliability of the old saws, cliches, and principles by which he used to direct his affairs. This new complexity does not necessarily challenge the legitimacy of managerial authority, rather it seeks to point out its limits, and even to improve its effectiveness by analysing the barriers to management control."

The argument being made is that magico-religious processes develop and thrive in response to randomness and incomprehensibility. A corollary of this is that in considering the range of management activities or managerial roles, those which relate to the most random and unpredictable responses will have the greatest number of rituals, myths and creeds attached to them. Cleverley's (1971) book on managers and magic dealt almost exclusively with

people-related activities. Additional chapters concerned themselves with market research and corporate planning issues. These areas also contain some of highest unpredictability elements.

This theme of certainty can be identified in the clarity and conviction with which the content of the management message is conveyed. Academic writings are, by tradition, filled with qualifications and disclaimers which can confuse and generate additional uncertainty in the reading or listening audience. Such qualifications tend to be absent in the popular management literature and seminar or conference presentations. Message-content certainty is conveyed through the presentation of procedures, step-by-step guides and golden rules. The vision of success is often forcefully projected as the overcoming of chaos and ambiguity.

Gellner (1985) argued that the sovereignty of evidence within the empirical theory of knowledge led to a cold and insubstantial world. We know what we know because of the evidence we have available to us. The corollary of this is that everything is conjectural. New evidence may abrogate it or transform our world. Thus, the world is not solid enough for the individual to lean on or support him. Hence, one way of accounting for the popularity of certain management ideas is that they offer a solid, non-conjectural, support-providing world. The techniques which spring from the ideas were invented to supply this made-to-measure commodity for managerial consumption.

Management practitioners seize upon concepts which will make sense of the world. An idea which substantially challenges their taken-for-granted will be rejected as absurd. The available anecdotal evidence suggests that the most popular ideas amongst managers, and the ones that academics find are best received, are those which possess face validity and are not counter-intuitive.

One can cite as an example, The One Minute Manager book (TOMM) (Blanchard and Johnson, 1983). These must be judged to be considered to be truly interesting as evidenced by the number of copies sold (over half a million) and the popularity of the seminars. TOMM possess both face validity and offers immediate and practical prescriptions for managers' behaviour.

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Thomas (1989: 22) argued that TOMM can be taken to reflect the emerging "domain assumptions" of management, which he listed as including the idea that managing was getting people to do what you wanted them to do; that it involved the easy-acquisition and application of simple, universally applicable, no-cost behavioural techniques that worked; that effective management required emotional labour; that self-control was a key feature of successful management; that what was good for employees was good for the organization and vice-versa; and that effective management was based on the ethic of honesty.

Thomas contended that the TOMM text set up what he called a, "congenial resonance" in its management readers. Some elements of it accorded with their assumption ground, whilst denying others. Above all, TOMM seemed to <u>deny</u> the very thing that management educators had, over the history of management education wished to assert. Namely, that there were no simple, universally effective, ethically unquestionable, behavioural techniques of management.

Like the search for the Holy Grail, managers shared a belief that there **was** an answer, that a cure must exist for any corporate malaise, and that man was a perfectible animal. If employees were lacking in commitment, it was not that they were unmotivatable, but rather than the wrong motivational technique was being used. Gellner's point made earlier, was that managers did not experience total randomness in their interactions with others, but that they were failing to grasp the underlying logic of the "tight pattern".

The search for certainty and predictability is a theme which allows one to draw upon an otherwise diverse set of writings. Forrest (1984) argued that one of the fundamental themes of the American character was the essential religiosity in the American consciousness. In the management world this produced both its priests and its followers. Many writers have commented on the quasi-religious nature of much management education. Harvey (1974) likened organizational development (OD) to a religious movement. He argued that it contained both its Old Testament prophets (McGregor, Likert) and New Testament prophets (Blake, Beckhard, Walton). The faithful quoted the scriptures (Argyris, Chapter 2, verse 14). Its ceremonies and rituals were performed as OD techniques (T-groups, teambuilding, life planning, confrontation meetings). It had a liturgy ("Blessed are those who collaborate for they shall inherit the organization"). It even possessed a seminary training for its priesthood ("I

graduated from the Grid seminar in Toledo"). Additional features which Harvey noted included revival meetings, techniques for dealing with priest "burnout" and a messianic approach to both success and failure.

Oliver (1990) described the images of religious conversion in Eli Goldratt's Just-in-Time seminar which included a testimonial by a recent convert, a recognition by the audience of its inadequacies (sinfulness), and the promise of redemption. All this was supported with the de-bunking of existing frameworks, their replacement with his assessment of good and bad (ideas), and finally the warning of the dangers of false prophets.

Why should managers need comforting? Various writers have referred to the difference between the myth and the reality of organizational life. According to Watson (1986: 19), *"The image or myth of an organization [is] as a goal-seeking entity whose components can be carefully arranged to process various inputs into the kinds of outputs required by the organizational goal."* What is not clear is whether managers believe that this is so or act to create that belief. Also, whether they know that such an image is untrue and seek to defend themselves against the "dangers" of organizational life. Considering each of these views in turn, one can say that people create their own reality. Critics may call them deluded, but the process of reality creation and maintenance can serve as a psychological defence. This is especially true when an individually manufactured view is actively and continually supported by outside communication.

One can identify two views of organizations in the literature. The first sees the organization as a happy ship while the second views it as a jungle. The unitary view of the company as one happy ship is:

> *"... often preferred because it makes comfortable both academic theorists and the senior executives who would find it too discomforting to have to fully come to terms with the degree of randomness, ambiguity and, above all, human cussedness with which those nearer to the settings in which real work is done are all too familiar."*

Watson (1986: 39)

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Watson argued that even though the company may not be the goal-setting system, it was an essential management requirement **to act as if it was**, rather than as if it could be. The frequently heard demands for the devising of explicit corporate strategies as an essential part of good management practice, was in his view, evidence for this. To sustain such a preferred view of organizations as essentially co-operative systems, managers demanded ideas and techniques which were either based upon that belief or which actively promoted it. An alternative view of organizations saw them as jungles. Perrow (1977) wrote that complex social systems were greatly influenced by chance, accident and luck; that most decisions were ambiguous; that preference orders were incoherent and unstable; that efforts at communication and understanding were often ineffective; that sub-systems were often loosely connected, and that most attempts at social control were clumsy and unpredictable.

This jungle view saw organizations as consisting of collections of self-interested and competing groups and individuals who co-operated only when it suited their private or individual purposes. This view has been described in books such as Townsend's (1970) "Up the Organization", Peter and Hull's (1969) "The Peter Principle" and Parkinson's (1957) works. The cynicism they contain counters the myth of the organization as a neutral, rational, goal-setting entity.

What other evidence is there to support the idea of the anxiety provoking nature of managerial life? Ouchi and Johnson in their comparative study of American companies (Company A) and Japanese (Company Z) management reported that:

> "The only discordant note in the interviews at Company A was the clear and consistent fear of the future. Executives at Company A believe that their future depends entirely on their profitability, and that their profitability has more to do with the state of the economy and the industry than it does with their own decisions and performance, and thus they feel helpless. They appear to cope with this apparently capricious evaluation system by bolstering their professional credentials to increase their marketability with potential employers."
>
> Ouchi and Johnson (1978: 301)

The general notion of an organization generating anxieties by its own task which requires the adoption of defensive mechanism on the part of its employees has been extensively documented by Tavistock Institute researchers (Menzies, 1969: Miller, 1976: 20). Anxiety producing situations at work are numerous and include individuals being placed between internal and external organizational demands and ineffective task performance. Rice (1965) listed task requirements and the form of organization as contributing to anxiety at work.

Buchanan, Boddy and Sutherland (1985: 2) wrote about the characteristics of managers and other staff specialists who were involved in promoting technical change in their organizations. Here was a prime example of an anxiety-provoking situation. Describing the stereotype of the highly anxious innovation promoter or "champion" responsible for introducing the change, these authors wrote:

> *"The promoter, who may be self-selected or placed in this role, is generally isolated within the organization, but visible, vulnerable and anxious. The promoter role can be risky and uncomfortable, as well as satisfying. Individuals in such positions are thus seeking confidence and reassurance, to know that they have covered the relevant facts, that their proposals are soundly based, and that they have chosen the right direction for technical and organizational change."*

Cleverley (1971) cited the research findings of famous social anthropologists such as Lucy Mair and Sir James Frazer in order to draw parallels between the practices described in primitive tribes and his own personal observations of managerial behaviour. His basic argument was that much managerial behaviour was essentially irrational. This was so even though there was a widely held belief that managers were or ought to be, rational creatures who were ready to apply empirical and scientific methods in pursuit of objectively determined goals. He argued that many aspects of managerial behaviour fulfilled a magico-religious purpose. Moreover, management had its own system of taboos and was essentially ritualistic, ceremonial and magical in nature. Such behaviour was held by him to meet either the **instrumental** needs of managers (to influence and control their environment including the people

within it) or **expressive** needs (those directed at releasing some kind of inner conflict, settling unease or expressing emotion). Often a behaviour could meet both types of needs.

Andre (1985) contrasted those managers who acted primarily on the basis of science with those who acted on faith. The former looked to the accumulated knowledge of management science, not for answers but for ideas and approaches. In contrast, the latter group acted on faith and adopted a particular management idea or technique because it was advocated by someone in authority or whose views they respected. Guion (1975) wrote about the gullibility of managers who acted on ideas without any requirement of evidence of whether or not it would work. The essence of gullibility lay in the managers' inability or unwillingness to seek out and evaluate the available evidence or to note its absence. These managers made little effort to seek alternative ideas. Their optimism about creating a better organization by the use of the technique was based upon their faith in the authority figure who commended it, be it a hero-manager, a consultant guru or an academic guru.

This issue of failure was only relevant if the main purpose of the exercise was an instrumental one. Even then, no manager who was responsible for the purchase of a technique or the engagement of a consultant, was going to admit that he had made a mistake if the technique or advisor failed to live up to expectations. However disastrous the consequences, he was likely to say that the company had "got what it wanted out of it". In this context, attribution theory (Ross, 1977) can help one to understand the way in which people assign causes for success and failure. Typically, individuals treat any success as being due to them and any failure as attributable to others. Thus, the failure of a management technique is attributed neither to the manager's choice nor to the content features of the technique. Instead, blame is attributed to the other persons involved, to the "system" or to environmental factors over which the manager has no control.

Management technique failure is less important (or irrelevant) in a situation where expressive goals are being sought. The act of calling in consultants, or the purchase of the management technique itself may be sufficient to resolve a manager's inner conflict or settle his unease. Such a purchase can re-assure a manager and reinforce a view of himself as a member of the business

community, as in the case of quality circle users. Whether the bought-in technique actually achieves any measurable improvements is viewed as either irrelevant or as a bonus.

The fact that popular management ideas upon which the techniques are based may fail to meet scientific criteria for endorsement is also irrelevant. No religious belief system is empirically verifiable. What is important is that more and more managers should learn about a particular approach. Christianity and Islam are powerful social forces but neither depends for its impact upon scientific validity. Their importance comes from the number of their adherents and the effect on the social and economic life of the countries where these religions are practised. Any "failure" in the belief system can be rationalised, and a person's expressive needs can outweigh demands for the achievement of instrumental objectives.

In the absence of hard and fast universal rules there are alternatives available. Managers can choose from "distilled wisdom", "secrets of success" and crude empiricism ("It worked for them, it'll work for you !"). What these three offer is certainty and the peace-of-mind to be gained by buying a product or service that has been de-bugged and which has had any problems ironed out. Numerous management products are marketed on the basis of their successful track record. The new customer gains the benefits of revisions and improvements. In the case of **"distilled wisdom"**, the customer is given the illusion of buying cheaply into a bank of knowledge as the following examples from training course brochures show:

"Since its inception in 1974, LDL has invested thousands of hours, and hundreds of thousands of pounds in researching the sales process. The results are included in this seminar and are yours for £39 plus VAT."

Close That Sales *brochure*

"In two days you can learn from 25 years of experience."

Effective Negotiating *brochure*

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£7M of unique OA experience.

All for just £10.

> **"Doctors spent fourteen years developing this diet. It changed my life in as many days"**

Karrass' "Effective Negotiating" course brochure invites participants to "learn the secrets of effective negotiating." There is a tension here. Secrets may be perceived as threatening ("powerful medicine"). Seminar participants see the secret being possessed by the seminar leader, but dispensed in such a way that it can be understood by the faithful followers who will not be frightened away. The religious undertones in the advertising copy are unmistakable. In one case, making the point by denying it!

> *"There is nothing mysterious or metaphysical about the Liberating Leadership concept. It is based on a few straightforward procedures and behaviours, allied to a simple theoretical foundation. Simple, straightforward. However, doing it well and consistently is often difficult."*

Liberating Leadership *brochure*

> *"It sounds simple and it works."*

Time Manager International *brochure*

Religion and magic are only weakened by new systems which offer superior methods of achieving results, and promise a more satisfactory means of releasing the perennial need for expression. Cleverley (1971: 102) identified a number of reasons for changing beliefs. These were drawn directly from Firth's work on the changing religious beliefs of the natives on the Polynesian island of Tikopia:

(a)   Economic benefit

As known experts in the field they hope to increase their prospects of advancement. Irrespective of their belief in it, they expect to be treated better by their superiors.

(b)   Conviction of the truth of an idea

Managers may be persuaded intellectually by the logic or empirical basis of the teaching. This is necessary but not itself sufficient.

(c)   Conviction

Accepting it not because it was thought to be correct but because it seemed to offer a more pleasant life.

(d)   Conformity to external authority

Managers impressed by outsiders who claim to know the true ways of doing things.

(e)   Obedience to internal authority

Adopted because the boss had.

(f)   <u>Hope of attaining increased status through conversion</u>

Managers who want to be seen at the forefront of organizational progress.

(g)   <u>Attraction of corporate life</u>

Feeling of fellowship created by sharing esoteric jargon and attending seminars and courses.

(h)   <u>Magnetism of mass movement</u>

Being part of a community.

(i)   <u>Unease at division in the community</u>

Did not like to "rock the boat" hence outward conformity to a set of beliefs not genuinely held is considered preferable to appearing to be a dissenter.

Dixon (1987: 214) identified the reduction of boredom as a crucial (albeit in his view a self-destructive) motive.   The relation of boredom to arousal, curiosity, exploratory activity and information overload are relevant.   The unexpected-in-life does much to reduce boredom.   Dixon argued that a great source of the unexpected are people.   Being unpredictable, they can do a lot of different things, and in a different order.   Being a rich source of information, the control of their activities constitutes a boredom-reducing goal for the manager.   When we are not discussing the weather, most of us are talking about other people.   Interest in people reduces boredom in life.

Continuing to consider management needs in the cognitive-intellectual domain, attention is now turned to assess the evidence for managers' need for control. An analysis of information sought by managers from the British Institute of Management's information services (Blagden, 1980) revealed that 24 per cent of enquires were about management techniques. This was the most sought after data. Personnel topics received 49 enquires (16 per cent of the total). Classifying external information sought by American managers, Keegan (1974) found that management principles and techniques again ranked top with 120 queries representing 16 per cent of the total. This was followed by technical queries (10 per cent), financial and credit questions (10 per cent) and government legislation questions (7 pert cent). It is interesting to note that managers on both sides of the Atlantic appear to share a common interest in management techniques. There are two main sources of information on techniques. These are written (books and journals) and verbal (courses, seminars and conferences).

Written sources

Management techniques appear to have a special attraction for managers who have a product vision of knowledge. This perspective equates the possession of knowledge about a subject with the possession of a technique. The growth of "how to" publications is a testimony to managerial needs in this area. *"Ask executives what they want by way of improving literature and most call for a richer menu of management techniques"* (Heller, 1985: 324). He felt that they could not have enough of barely comprehensible inventions such as Monte Carlo simulation, management by exception, statistical sampling or linear programming.

Even the popular hero-manager publications which have achieved a huge success in their own right, have been re-packaged to provide a technique focus. Thus, following the publication of *"Iacocca: The Autobiography"* (Iacocca, 1985), there was *Iacocca Management Techniques*. Following Clutterbuck and Goldsmith's (1985), *The Winning Streak* came the *Winning Streak Check Book*

(Clutterbuck and Goldsmith, 1986). This seems to suggest that managers seek techniques on management. Master the technique and will you will save consultancy fees while at the same time avoiding personal failure.

Verbal sources

Many popular forms of management training are offered by training companies or training consultants. Such offerings include seminars such as "Time Manager International", "Liberating Leadership Team", Leadership Development's "Close that Sale!", Karrass's "Effective Negotiating" and the one day seminars from CareerTrack with titles such as "Management Skills for Technical Professionals" and "How to Set and Achieve Your Goals".

Attendance at these seminars is substantial if the firms' advertising literature is to be believed. The "Close that Sale" seminar claims 59,000 participants from 70 countries. Time Manager International claims that 28,000 people participated in its worldwide series of seminars during 1986. Finally, Effective Negotiating claims a worldwide participation rate of 150,000. Such courses are usually of one day's duration. They go for a low price (£75) and high attendance (100 people plus). They involve minimal audience participation, a "high-energy" presenter, and are filled with techniques and "proven skills". From their advertising literature one can see that the majority of short seminars and courses offer specific techniques which promise an immediate solution to participants' problems as the following sample descriptions illustrate:

> *"An outline of the principles, procedures and behaviours that add up to a liberating leadership ... A number of ideas and techniques that you can start to apply during the day itself".*

> **Liberating Leadership Programme**

> *"This remarkable seminar sets out to provide a stream of ideas to develop selling ability".*

> **Close That Sale Seminar**

"The objective of the Management Effectiveness Seminar is to internalize the skills, knowledge and beliefs of 3-D Theory of Managerial Effectiveness in such a way that they become part of the manager's day to day worklife."

Management Effectiveness Seminar

"The limit on the numbers of attendees makes it possible for each one to benefit from specific, usable ideas and methods ... so the information, the ideas and the techniques you learn are all directly applicable to real situations, and you can put them to use immediately."

Effective Negotiating Course

The buying and selling of management techniques as solutions to problems argued Cleverley (1971), demonstrated both instrumental and expressive motives. The manager who bought the latest technique and the consultant or company which supplied it, both acted in the secure belief that they were doing something beneficial for the individual recipient, the company and the economy. Thus the purchase and adoption or consumption decision fulfilled an instrumental need. Additionally, the purchase and use of some management technique by the manager, represented an expression of his solidarity with the group to which he belonged. It thus also fulfilled an expressive need.

This opinion is shared by Mayer (1983: 24) who sought to explain what he called the "panacea conspiracy". This involved the sellers and buyers of management techniques colluding with each other. Mayer argued that the conspiracy was not the result of either managerial perversity or opportunistic manipulation by the consultant. Instead, it was the result of short term pressures, rationalization and lack of awareness on the part of the individual manager. It revolved around the manager's lack of interest in, and knowledge of, people management issues, combined with the need to do something about them quickly.

The consultant colluded in this conspiracy. While he may have seen the solution of the problem as essentially a long-term one, he recognized the manager's lack of knowledge (or desire to acquire the necessary knowledge), his disinterest in the subject, and his lack of commitment to putting in the sustained effort required. According to Mayer, the consultant rationalized that, since the manager was not ready to deal with what really needed to be done, any gimmick was worth trying which might trigger the manager's interest, bring progress, impress him, or make him grateful to the consultant or make him feel valued and secure.

An important aspect of buying behaviour is what can be called the individuality-community aspect. This refers to the phenomenon of managers and trainers wanting to be seen to be using some new technique, **both** before and at the same time as, everyone else. They want to be ahead of the latest fad and inside it at the same time. Becker (1973) argued that man was driven by an essential dualism. He needed to be both part of something and to stand out. He needed to be, at one and the same time, a conforming member of a winning team and to be a star in his own right. The former respresented the need to express individuality while the latter involved the need to submerge it in the safety of the crowd. People wished to do both. This paradoxical situations did create a problem but it was soluble.

The ritual of expressing community can be found in the advertising literature for techniques which claim that millions of managers have benefited from technique X or technique Y. The ritual expression of individuality comes from selecting a particular version of that technique Y and customizing it. Thus in a year in which time management or stress management are popular approaches, there are likely to be a wide range of different courses and packages on these themes. In the field of clothes, while there may be a predominant fashion theme, there will be a range of dresses within that theme.

Thus the management techniques which are likely to be most sought after are those which stress those aspects of the manager's environment over which he has control and which he can influence, while de-emphasising or ignoring those variables over which he lacks control. For this reason, one finds little reference

to the "environment" in anything other than a general way. This is because the environment represents a source of uncertainty which can engender feelings of powerless and anomie in the manager.

Advertising copy for some management ideas emphasizes this point. Reddin's 3-D Theory of Management Effectiveness, Figure 6.1, defines the manager's situation in terms of five key variables which, to varying degrees, are all within his control. The marketing tells him that how he responds to these situational elements, or how he changes these demands will have a direct bearing on his effectiveness. In this theoretical formulation, managerial effectiveness arises from the situation and is within the control of the manager if he "...chooses and uses the right behaviour."

Figure 6.1: **Reddin's Route to Effectiveness Through Five Situational Variables.**

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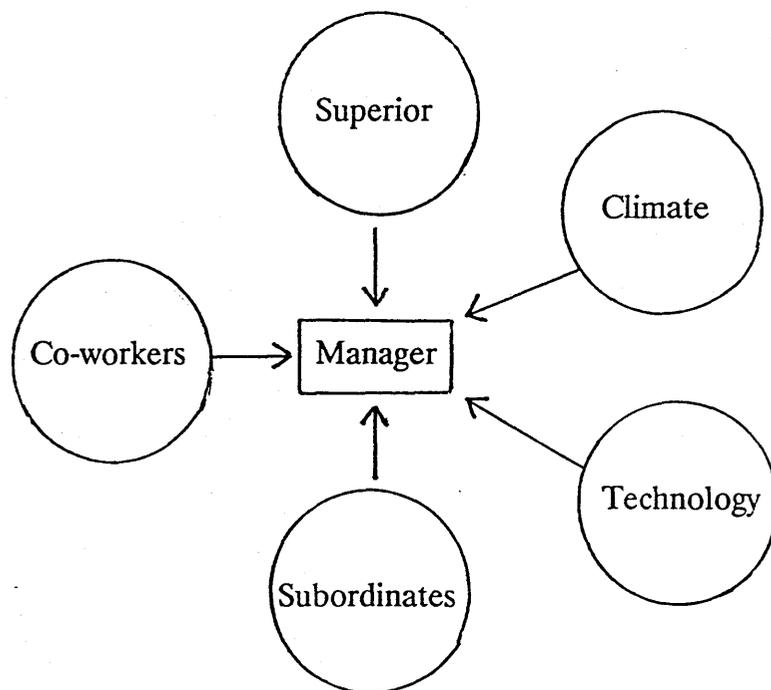
SOCIAL NEEDS

Attention is now turned to the right hand side of Table 6.2. This is the part that addresses the manager's affective-emotional needs. Within this domain, social needs refer to the esteem accorded to managers by others. These will be examined first. Enhancing managerial status through confidence building measures is the third recognized need. Watson (1986) argued that British managers were typically afflicted with insecurities and anxieties which stemmed from the incongruence between their high status as "wealth creators", and their low status as non-professionals. Their responsibility for controlling the uncontrollable (especially other employees) and the absence of any clear definition of their role also caused them tension. Mangham and Silver (1986) reported that "... *to articulate the skills, abilities and competences required of managers, produces different answers, not only between companies but within companies".*

In the past, managerial status has been challenged by the ambiguity experienced by managers in being at one and the same time, both bosses and company employees. They were asked to control others yet were themselves controlled. The nineteenth century company acts created a caste of non-owning managers who sought recognition in their own right. This is a process which has been extensively documented by Child (1969a). If managers have been seeking their occupational identity, it is not surprising that texts and seminars which provided a strong concept of management would be positively received.

In Britain, the status of businessmen and managers has not been historically high. In the past, entry into the professions, notably the medicine, the law, and the church was preferred. The Civil Service has been favoured over commerce or industry. Mant (1979) observed that what he called "British binary thought", divided jobs into clean, respectable U-category ones, and dirty, disruptable, non-U category ones. In his view, managers were in the latter grouping. Accountancy was perhaps one of the few areas in which professional ambitions and business concerns came together. This low social status of businessmen was also true of the United States but to a lesser extent and in a different way. Gilkes, president of the publishing house, The Free Press, noted:

"The role of the corporation in American life was underestimated and undervalued for more than 50 years.   It played the villain in the melodrama that American social analysts promulgated to describe what they thought was social and economic reality in America."

Gilkes (in Knowlton 1989:62)

However, by the 1980s, American business found itself in the cultural mainstream and the nation's newest celebrities were the managers in the corporate world. Cummings (Pierce and Newstrom, 1990) felt that bestsellers provided an apology, rationale or the positioning of American management as something which was not just on the defensive with regard to world competition. The writings acted to raise the social status of management.   The thesis will now examine the evidence for this proposition.

The issue of managerial social insecurity and defensiveness is a constant theme in the literature. Watson (1986) argued that much of what was written and said about management was concerned to justify it or to give legitimacy to managerial work.   Perhaps the outstanding modern contribution to the task of legitimising the role of management in Western society was done by Drucker. His book, *The Practice of Management* (Drucker, 1954) was sub-titled, "A study of the most important function in American society."   In the book he wrote that, *"The manager is the dynamic, life-giving element in every business".*   In this role he felt that managers' activities had ramifications beyond their office walls since management would remain a basic and dominant institution as long as Western civilization itself survived.   According to the Drucker, the manager had two tasks.   He had to create a whole that was larger than the sum of its parts.   Second, he had to harmonize in his decisions and actions, the requirements of the immediate and the long-term future.   These tasks were somewhat vague, just as the precepts of any new religion tended to be vague.

Child (1969a) argued that management thought had two functions. Its technical function was concerned with the practical means of carrying out tasks.   Its legitimatory function was "primarily linked to the securing of social recognition and approval for managerial authority and the way it is used".   To the extent that the execution of the technical aspects of management (e.g. setting up

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payment systems) involved persuading others to go along with it, Watson felt that everything that the managers or their spokesmen said or wrote about their activities, was coloured by the constant concern to defend their authority.

The right to manage and maintain legitimacy in his view, had to be constantly re-established. Such social inferiority surfaced strongly in the 1970s when the financial advantage associated with managerial work diminished, and when management's right to manage was challenged by legislation, trade unions and employees. Mant (1979: 51-2) discussed the "professional management movement" and felt that managers needed:

> "... *a body of arcane knowledge on which they are based and which distinguishes them from other callings. If the agents of the owners required legitimation for what they were up to, then they needed a "profession", but they could not have a profession of the tradition type without a science. So the hunt was on for some set of 'principles' of management to justify the existence of the profession in the first place.*"

It is hypothesised that there is an on-going need for managers to reinforce their image by acquiring social standing. Managerial action cuts across many widely held liberal democratic values such as liberty, fraternity, freedom of choice and defence against exploitation. In terms of what managers do on a daily basis, these values are ignored and personal self-guilt generated. Such "unethical" managerial behaviour in a socio-cultural context generates existential discomfort which seeks release.

The original purpose of the search for management principles, according to Mant, was not to maximize profit but to legitimate the manager's role. This represented a reversal of the traditional process by which professions have developed. Baker (1972: 31) identified the psychological benefits of having such a body of management theory:

"...the identification of management, organization of administration as a distinct function to be studied in its own right ... The practical achievement was to make men think and apply themselves to the problem of management and organization, **and to give those who did so some feeling of pride and self respect** *[author's emphasis].*

Mant (1979: 53) argued that the managerial literature went beyond the mere description and categorization of management tasks and engaged in manufacturing *"... a mythology about executive work, sedulously nourished by the management consultants, business school professors and so on. Executives like the myth and are prepared to pay good money to have it reinforced."*

The myth that Mant referred to concerned the rational, scientific decision-making, building-on-facts, leadership-based-on-knowledge-not-force approach. That part of the mythology of management has been called a "well-organized guild or church that sustains itself".   It does not have to rely on the published works of authors in order to be sustained and promulgated. The ideas of management have a definite role both within management practice and within academic business school activity.

Child discussed the importance of creating a "theory of management" which underpinned the practice of management, the importance of having educational institutions to teach it, and the need for a British Institute of Management to confirm a quasi-professional status upon its members.   1986 was "Industry Year" with the slogan "Industry Matters" which confirmed the belief that not enough people in Britain felt that it did.   The Chartered Manager Initiative launched in the late 1980s took this process one step further, certifying that managers <u>did</u> possess certain unique skills and knowledge.

The ambiguities themselves derived from the large scale social and economic context of management.   The effect was to complicate the situation in which managers found themselves.   At a basic level it manifested itself as managerial insecurity.   Thus one can argue that writers, theorists and management consultants   offer a variety of "images of managerial work".   These act to reassure managers, reduce their insecurity and justify their position.

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Watson (1986)) distinguished the views of management as art, science, magic and politics (Figure 6.2). The **management-as-science** view was based upon the belief that there was a body of knowledge, either is existence or awaiting discovery, which could be learned and acted upon to achieve effectiveness. Scientific management was perhaps the prime exponent of this view , although it was shared by classical administrative theory. **Management-as-art** emphasised that managerial ability was a matter of intuition, wit and personality.

Figure 6.2: Management as art, science magic and politics (Watson 1986: 29)

Management as art

Successful mangers are those born with appropriate intuition, intelligence and personality which they develop through the practice of leadership

Management as science

Successful managers are those who have learned the appropriate body of knowledge and have developed an ability to apply acquired skills and techniques

Management as magic

Successful managers are those who recognise that nobody really knows what is going on and who persuade others of their own powers by calling up the appropriate gods and by engaging in the expected rituals

Management as poltics

Successful managers are those who can work out the unwritten laws of life in the organisational jungle and are able to play the game so that they win

Management was seen as involving the indefinable (and hence unteachable) qualities which were associated with the notion of leadership. Leadership skill, this school stated, could be developed although not acquired. To have an art is to possess and practise in-born talents. Much of the hero-manager branch of guru theory rests upon the proposition that these great men possess the qualities lacked by the majority of the readers. The management development movement's starting point is the belief that everybody innately possesses leadership potential which needs to be developed. Mintzberg (1973) argued that managerial work was not done by procedures prescribed by scientific analysts but by "intuitive" seat-of-the-pants approaches.

The **management-as-magic** school sees the role of management to control the mysterious elements around, especially human beings. It involves occasionally resorting to ritualism and following the behavioural scientists. The ritualism comes from the application of principles whose effectiveness is unknown. They cite research and theory to support their views. Finally **management-as-politics** sees management as concerned with manipulating symbols, rituals, myths and other cultural devices to weld together the efforts of human beings into a coherent whole. This is viewed as political behaviour. Managers are involved in power relations with those whom they manage. They are in competition for scarce resources with fellow-managers. Large parts of the excellence-corporate culture school of guru theory stress this theme (Peters and Waterman, 1982: Deal and Kennedy, 1982).

From this perspective, the criticism by managers and organizations of the relevance of MBA programmes can be viewed somewhat differently. So too can the explanation for the popularity of courses such as time management. One can argue that the former are in fact **too** relevant. Participating in extended MBA type programmes may be threatening. These offerings are based on research and the objective assessment of manager performance. Exposure to this might seriously undermine a manager's positive perception of himself. Such programmes threaten to identify their weaknesses, highlight their deficiencies and leave them with negative feelings that what they are doing is wrong and that they must start anew. What must such programmes stress instead if they are to be popular?

From the evidence of attending numbers, it appears that they should offer a positive image of the management role. Popular courses such as Time Manager International focus on the individual manager and emphasise success. The TMI brochure offers a "feeling of satisfaction ... [that] is almost beyond description". Such course-running companies can be seen as primarily selling psychological well-being. The vehicle for this may be a time management course, an inter-personal skills course, or indeed a course on any topic provided that it projects the image of the manager as **essential** (a person indispensable to the well-being of the organization); **resourceful** (possessing desirable personal qualities); and **successful** (highly effective in the job already).

Analysis of manufacturing industry in 1984 reported that British production chiefs tended to be pre-occupied with patching-up activities. These included chasing up overdue supplies; cannabalizing components; urging quality-control departments to pass what had previously been judged to be defective bought-in parts; re-scheduling jobs; and organizing overtime to catch-up. The quality valued in the in British manufacturing culture was *resourcefulness* which might also be called "structured indispensability". This was a process in which managers created crises, the solving of which confirmed their indispensability to the running of the system.

Allan Katcher, an American psychologist, asked senior U.S. executives what they would least wanted their subordinates to know about them. In 19 of the 20 cases the answer was the same. They feared that their junior staff would come to know how inadequate the chiefs felt in their jobs (Dixon 1986d: 14). Thus, one can argue that the growth in the popularity of management guru books and seminars, far from being linked with an upturn in managers' confidence, in fact represents a response to widespread self-doubt among executives, even amongst those at the top.

Past management writers stressed rationality and implied that to excel, managers had to virtually beome gods. Since few could achieve such perfection the majority were doomed to a state of inadequacy. The advertising literature of the popular Liberating Leadership Team Programme in contrast, contains examples of positive communication and psychological massaging:

" Bold. Far seeing. Thoughtful. Honest. Persistent. Effective and Open to Ideas! Someone very close to you has all these and many other great leadership qualities. Who can that person be? It's you of course."

"During the taster day we will introduce you to: your own excellent ideas about what a good leader does and does not do."

"Just think what wonderful leaders and people we would be, if only we could realise all those innate capabilities, put them to work for ourselves and our organization."

"It's a puzzle, all of us have difficulty in doing justice to the qualities we have that would make us leaders".

PERSONAL NEEDS

Personal needs are the second category in the affective or emotional domain. They relate to the esteem in which the individual holds him or herself. The need for re-affirmation of a positive self-image can explain why as much attention is paid to the management evangelists as to their messages. The status of the idea presenter is often more important than the message being conveyed. This is true whether the presentation is in writing or verbal. In the case of the latter, the guru on the platform speaks the rhetoric of success with the language of conviction.

The books by hero-managers possess little that could not be found in an introductory management textbook. It is the fact that the ideas contained within them are expounded by a successful CEO of a multi-million corporation that give them their value. Moreover, the managers attending the seminars by the top presenters already know what the person will say. Thus it appears that the appeal of these gurus for the management audience lies more in **them** as individuals than in their message. Cleverley (1971: 59) referred to these gurus as the sorcerers of management:

"Managers seek recourse to unorthodox sources of power and knowledge. And since there culture is semi-literate, they seek help chiefly from sorcerers who have developed their own salvation through profit. They call them consultants."

Personalities are a critical aspect on the seminar circuit:

"It is almost impossible for someone to listen to him and not get more sales as a result ... His dynamic approach, his drive, his enthusiasm transmits itself to the audience and never fails to influence them."

> Brochure description of Robin Fielder, leader of the **"Close That Sale"** seminar

"Since then over 150,000 professionals have benefited from Dr Karrass' unrivalled knowledge, and his unique ability to identify, formulate and communicate the practical skills of negotiating".

> Brochure description of Dr Chester Karrass, leader of the **"Effective Negotiating"** seminar

Managers may search out the management gurus to receive their guidance in the same way as believers might look to their religious leaders. Much has been written about management charisma. Some of the modern management gurus such as Drucker, Deming, Peters and Kanter possess a charismatic quality in the eyes of their followers. De Vries (1988) defined charismatic leadership as a gift of grace possessed mainly by prophets who appear at historical moments of distress. Charismatic leadership has a salvationistic or messianic quality.

Thus, charismatic leadership became prominent during periods of uncertainty and unpredictability, that is, at crisis points. It was Weber who argued that charismatic leaders rose to prominence in periods of psychic, physical, ethical, religious, political or economic distress. Stable, well-functioning societies had less need of their services.

Charismatic leadership seems to be a function of the need for order. Paradoxically, in providing "deliverance" , truly charismatic leadership tends to be revolutionary in that it may conflict with the established order.   This dilemma is solved by gurus creating order out of disorder, and by providing their followers with new systems of coherence and continuity.

The power of the gurus comes from their ability to articulate the issues of the business world.   Managers become susceptible to a guru's ideas by the process of projection.   The charismatic phenomenon of the guru is created as much by the managers as by the guru himself.   It is based on the managers' personality dynamics. Although they appear to be passive spectators, managers are, in fact, the true inventors of the image of the idealized manager, referred to as the charismatic guru leader.   This image is carried about within the psyches of all managers, in one form or another.   A guru is legitimised by the perceptions of his followers. Projective processes seem to play a major role in myth making and the symbolic actions from which these perceptions emerge (Schiffer, 1973). The business media plays its role in this process as well.

Because of the ambiguity and complexity of life's events, we choose guru leaders to help us make order out of chaos. Leaders become the outlets for assuming responsibility for otherwise inexplicable phenomena. These attributional projective processes, lead to leaders becoming the recipients ("containers") of other peoples' ideals, wishes, desires and fantasies (Bion, 1959). They become imbued with the mystical, charismatic qualities by their followers.

Frequently the management seminars are identified by their developer's or promulgator's name ("Spend a Day with Tom Peters").   The companies may send their executives to sit at the management guru's feet and hope that they have the right money, and are there at the right time to buy what he is selling. To the guru, faith is more important than fact, and image and symbolism are as important as reality. Often management gurus may tell half truths. They may exaggerate a point since it is image that matters most. To the guru, if it feels good, it is good.   For them, the bottom line is the "happiness sheet" that the participants fill in at the end of the day.   They may rationalise this by claiming that faith itself is what drives change.

There are few wonder workers or magicians to mediate between the individual manager and the uncontrollable forces in the organizational world. In the past, before the thirteenth century, one could create one's own saints until Rome took this practice under its control. Perhaps the same practice continues to be used in management. Thomas (1978) argued that saints were what people wanted. They did not just intercede with God for you leaving the outcome to Him, they performed the trick themselves, and that was magic. Andre (1985) argued that the management guru believed both in himself and his orthodoxy. More than a mere salesman, the guru was his own convert. He exulted that, *"I have seen it with my own eyes ! People have told me how effective I am! I am the way, the truth and the consultant!"*

One way to meet the managers need for psychological well-being was to create folk heroes who might be elevated to star status. Klein's (1959) work in psycho-analytical theory argued that normal adults, when they experienced situations of persecutory anxiety, reverted to earlier patterns of behaviour and used the processes of projective and introjective identification to defend themselves against the anxiety. Managers who felt concerned about their self-esteem or their value might focus on a successful manager like Iacocca, Harvey-Jones or Scully. Since the manager wanted to be like his successful hero, he identified with him and introjected him, splitting off the bad parts and projecting them onto others.

Ritti and Funkhouser (1987: 128) argued that the existence of leadership was frequently inferred from the behaviour it presumably caused. This was the way that great leaders tended to be defined. Leadership was one of humanity's most cherished myths. Historical recountings of leadership are embellished and purified in our mythologies. Business magazines powerfully portray that myth with larger-than-life leaders being held to be single-handedly responsible for prosperity, resurrection, achievements and problems in organizations. According to these authors, the leadership myth is "enacted" within the culture of the organization by all the participants. Participants perceive and interpret events selectively to support the myth of management efficiency (i.e. the ability to produce results). Leaders contribute to the process of enactment by paying attention to symbol and ritual.

The same process may occur between managers, consultants and academic gurus. Byrne (1986) reported on a type of executive seminar called a "skunk camp". The similarity between his description of it and a religious retreat is instructive. The holy man leading this event was Tom Peters, the co-author of one of the world's best selling business books. The cost to each participant's company was $4000 and at this particular event, the day began with a group jogging session. Following a communal breakfast, the members gathered in the conference room "waiting for enlightenment". Byrne reported:

> *"In walks our rumpled leader. Head down, hands in the pockets of his brown shapeless chords, he paces relentlessly. His voice climbs to the treble clef as he runs through the litany: 'Dehumiliate ... Get rid of your executive parking spots ... Get everybody on the same team ... There are two ways to get rich: Superior customer satisfaction and constant innovation".*
>
> Byrne (1986: 45)

Byrne's description is surprisingly reminiscent of one reported by Oliver (1990: 15) of a Just-in-Time seminar run by another "holy man", Eli Goldratt (co-author of the book, <u>The Goal</u>)).

> *"Goldratt appeared punctually at 9.15 a.m., and in contrast to all the delegates who were wearing suits, he wore neither a jacket nor a tie and was wearing a skull-cap and open-toed sandals. He began by saying he had no pre-prepared slides or any notes... The expression the 'cost world' was used to denote old order and the "throughput world" to denote the new one ... Towards the end of the session, Goldratt threw out the question, 'Where shall we begin the improvement?' The audience responded with a chorus of cries of 'Us', 'Ourselves' and other similar expressions."*

Oliver highlighted the imagery of religious conversion in Goldratt's session which was evident in his style of presentation, dress and mode of audience response. It also included de-bunking of "false ideas" and their replacement

with his beliefs; the presentation of contrasting philosophies as 'different worlds' (one 'good' and the other 'bad'); and finally, an attack on a competing JIT author/guru as a "false prophet".

The excellence groupies do not appear to be troubled that the ideas that he presents all appear in his book. This phenomenon can be observed elsewhere. Concert goers attend performances of works they know well. In a radio interview, Cliff Richard revealed that in every live performance he included old hits which he sang exactly in their original form. Experiments with re-arrangements were not well received. He said that the original songs linked the audience's mind with some significant event or experience in their lives, and that in order for them to re-live it, it had to be sung in exactly the same way.

Managers may attend Tom Peters seminars to become immersed in his personality. In fact, if he was not to say what they may have already read, they would come away disappointed. Lorenz wrote that:

"... managers still pay repeated visits in their thousands to sit at [the guru's] feet, or buy his latest book. One executive at a leading multi-national talks of needing his 'Drucker fix' every two or three years."

Lorenz (1986c)

One is therefore left to explain why a manager should wish to attend a workshop, conference or seminar at which the guru will "perform" even though he has already read his book and knows what he will say. In Oliver's description (1990), 90% of Goldratt's audience claimed to have read his book. The notion of a "guru fix" is a common, although perhaps inappropriate metaphor. It leads one to believe that it is the performance itself that is valued. An alternative explanation can be offered. Koestler (1964: 307) suggested that the watching of illusions on stage (e.g. a guru performance) had a cathartic effect on the watchers. It enabled them to free themselves from their personal anxieties by identifying with the **personae** in the story, and thereby allowed them to achieve a certain self-transcendence which was peace-inducing.

The aim of the guru may be seen to share his experience and make others participate in it. The intrinsic value of illusion derives from it transferring the watcher's attention away from the "here and now" to the "there and then", that is, to a plain remote from self-interest. The attention is lured by heroes and victims which attract the audience's sympathy and with whom they partly identify. In so doing, they temporarily renounce their pre-occupations with their own worries and desires. Participating in the illusion inhibits a person's self-asserting tendencies and allows the self-transcending tendencies to unfold. The effect is cathartic.

Conrad (1985) argued that not only seminars, but also some books (such as Peters' writings) have this capacity. Their appeal is in their *mythos*, that is, their capacity to transport readers symbolically from a world of everyday experience to a mythical realm. The book's appeal for the reading manager, in this context, comes not, from the useful tips that the book may offer him but rather from the fact that, while reading it, he is living in the aura of success.

Illusion then is the simultaneous presence and interaction in the watcher's mind of two universes, one real and the other imaginary. The cathartic effect comes from the balancing of both spheres in the mind. The audience perceives the hero as Tom Peters and the successful manager whom he describes - at the same time. It is this precarious suspension of awareness between the two plains which facilitates the flux of emotions from the here-and-now to the there-and-then.

Once interest is deflected from the self, it will attach itself to something else. The falling level of self-assertive tension automatically allows the self-transcending impulses to dominate. The *creation of the illusion* itself (the process) has a cathartic value quite separate from the product (the content) of the presentation which may be judged to be cheap or uninspiring. Indeed from the video it can be judged that the presentation by someone like Peters is more akin to a revivalist meeting (generating emotion and adulation) than to a closely reasoned argument (supported by research) found in his books. The books themselves act as a springboard for their writers. The books lead their audiences to desire to meet their authors at first hand. The process helps the subject to actualize his potential of self-transcending emotions thwarted by the dreary routines of mundane existence. This seems to explain why just <u>being</u>

there, at the guru's presentation, is separate from, and additional to, obtaining his ideas. The presentation sessions of the gurus have been described as "experiences".

The self-transcending impulses are focused on identifying with the narrator or the subjects he describes. Introjection is the term used by psychologists to describe the process by which individuals take chunks and patterns of other people's existence into their own. They suffer and enjoy vicariously the emotions of those with whom they have become entangled. The emotions generated are vicarious ones derived from the spectator's participation in another person's existence. This is a self-transcending act. Self-transcending emotions which create the cathartic effect assume a double meaning. First, the concentration on the guru's performance rids the watcher's mind of the "dross of its self-centred trivial pre-occupations". Second, it provides a harmless outlet for the emotions so generated.

These points suggest that managers who attend guru presentations pay to get a buzz. Koestler (1964) pointed out that it is the *stimuli of the illusions and not the emotions that are all that are bought* when managers attend for the performance. The sequence of the stimuli are cunningly designed to trigger off their latent participatory emotions which would otherwise remain frustrated if an outlet was not provided. It is the managers who supply everything else. They buy a ticket to the illusion in which success and power are theirs. They enter into a self-transcient state in which they identify with the images that the guru projects. Having aroused their dominant self-transient potentials and having provided them with an outlet, the managers can return to reality, and get on with their tasks.

Two final points are relevant in this context. First, the need to participate (in the illusion) remains something more imperious and intense for humans, more than the thirst for knowledge or the desire for conformity with the claims of reason. Second, the use of the images provided by the gurus can impede the recognition of where reality ends and illusion begins. This phenomenon is not limited to participating in management guru seminars or conferences. It extends to the watching of plays in the theatre and soap operas on television. Knowing what will happen in the end (the punchline of the joke, that the police will arrive in time, what the guru will recommend) does not prevent the

audience experiencing the emotions of fear, anger, joy or satisfaction, and displaying the corresponding bodily symptoms. Paradoxically, it may actually enhance the experience. This capacity of human beings to live in two universes simultaneously (one real, the other imaginary) and to blur the line, is well known.

The most valued guru trick, however, is his ability to make accurate predictions based on his knowledge and skill. To the layman this is perceived as magic. Kantrow (1980) commented that Drucker's ability to foretell the future was remarkable. The continued appearance of instant gurus, each with his own personal gospel and proprietary lexicon suggests that managers have a need for such a service. In recent years, Pinchot (1985) has talked of intrapreneurship; (Deal and Kennedy, 1982) of corporate culture; and Adizes (1981) of consensus-building meetings and brainstorming sessions.

The question that is now posed is why do these managers need to see and talk to these gurus in the flesh even though they have read and are familiar with their ideas already? What does such personal contact offer them that cannot be obtained from these other sources? Lorenz (1986b) suggested that the process of reading proceeded learning about the idea. The best sellers gave a company an idea about what it might work on. This was reinforced by idea transmission mechanisms such as workshops. However, for senior staff, the process may be reversed. Comparing the relative impact of gurus' books with their seminar and conference appearances, Berry argued that most top European executives read business books only after they had been electrified by guru's presentation.

At this point in the argument one might draw upon the Freud's concept of the libidinal process of **identification**. This is the process whereby someone wants to be like someone else (de Board, 1978: 18). In the process of identification, the person wishing to be like the other person introjects that person into his ego. Identification by introjection can explain the bonding that is formed between a manager and the management guru. The manager first accepts the man, and then his ideas. In this context, the personal dimension - "feeling the flesh" is crucial, and reading about it is not a substitute.

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It is through the guru or his disciples that the magic is worked. One can see evidence of this in the elevation of management principles or goals when then come to be worshipped. Cleverley (1971) claimed that MbO and participation were two such principles. In his view, they had been transformed into beneficent spirits. However malevolent spirits also existed in the form of *bad organization, poor communication* and *weak marketing.* The role of the sorcerer (or his apprentice) was to use his medicine to drive out these bad spirits, which were often used as fashionable scapegoats to explain otherwise unaccountable misfortunes.

In this process, the presence of the guru appeared to be an indispensable element in the ritual in the way that a priest led a ceremony of exorcism. It was not sufficient for an acolyte to say his master's words. These must be uttered by the sorcerer himself. Commenting on a seminar by de Bono a manager said that "One seminar by de Bono teaches you more than reading his books". Kantrow's (1980) view on Drucker was that, *"One can learn more - and much more deeply - from watching him think than from studying the content of his thought."* Since it is impossible to watch a person's thought processes, one can assume that it was the physical presence at a Drucker seminar that was valued.

Customers paying to attend a seminar also have an investment in not de-mystifying the products of their chosen "saint". In accepting the person, they also accept his prescriptions for action or his package (if he has one to sell). They thus save themselves the time and trouble of picking over and analyzing it in detail. Since many of the available prescriptions are based on behavioural science research or else represent a social philosophy, most company trainers lack the theoretical background or expertise to evaluate them objectively. Additionally, they may lack the power to "disagree". By accepting the guru-figure they obtain a warm feeling. If the solution is successful, many people will be put through it. If it fails they will continue their search for another guru. The failure of a package or approach does not rock their faith that there is a Holy Grail to be found.

The religiosity of the whole experience is reflected in the currently fashionable management concepts of "corporate spirit", "soul of the organization", and the "vision of management". Perhaps most significant is the popularity of corporate

culture whose existence is contemplated like that of an individual's soul (Does it exist? Of what is it composed? Can it be changed/redeemed? What are the myths, rituals and heroes that have formed it?).

Cleverley (1971) distinguished between sorcerers who used a body of systematically acquired knowledge whom he labelled **medicine men**, and those whose power was supernatural and whom he called **witch doctors**. One would place nearly all management consultants in the former category. Only Herzberg and McGregor have found their way into the latter category. The major difference between the two classes is that in the case of the former, their power resides in knowledge and not in the individual. In the second case, that of the witch doctor, the power resides in the individual himself. Cleverley made a number of observations about the use of consultants. He wrote that managers, while dealing with complexity and chaos, needed to cling to the belief that someone, somewhere knew the answers. He cited the anthropologist Lucy Mair, who wrote that:

> *"They may be sceptical about the genuiness of particular practitioners, but everyone believes there are genuine ones somewhere; in times of real trouble they could have no hope without this belief."*

> Cleverley (1971)

Hastings (1989) wrote about senior executives who were presiding over the transformations of their organizations which were occurring at such a speed and to degree unknown before. Uncertainty was the order of the day, and high levels of it caused severe stress. Speed of change could lead to work overload which reduced feelings of control. Not knowing, and therefore not being in control was a deeply disturbing experience for many top executives. The need to find someone who knows what is going on itself creates its own consequences.

The first of these is a faith in outsiders. Considering non-technical problems, Cleverley (1971) argued that while a manager might doubt his own power and ability, he rarely doubted that of another person, at least when that person was first engaged. The manager assumed that the outside specialist possessed more

power for no other reason than that he was from outside. A consultant's power was held to be greater if he worked outside of his country of origin. Foreign magic was more mysterious, and therefore more powerful, than the domestic variety.

The second consequence is the stress upon no-surprise solutions. Cleverley argued that it was the type of consultant's answer that was required by the manager (rather than the problem) which dictated the choice of consultant or consultancy firm. Thus, rather than solving a performance problem, the company might select an Arthur Anderson solution or a McKinsey solution. Sorcerers tended to specialize and the all-purpose consultant was a rarity. It was inherent in the nature of knowledge gained by study and experience, that the sorcerer should be a specialist.

Third was the belief in the existence of the Holy Grail. The failure of a consultant or a package, far from de-motivating management, could energize them to double their efforts for a "better" consultant or a "better" solution. Cleverley offered an explanation for this seemingly paradoxical situation which merits detailed quotation.

> *"More often the manager believes that the really efficacious technique is still around the corner. Somewhere - in work study, in industrial engineering, in behavioural science, in autonomic systems, in decentralization, in planned management development, in one of a hundred other fashionable phrases - he must be able to find the true secret. And so he reads success stories, listens to successful speakers, analyses case studies attends conferences and seminars. Not always is he credulous, frequently he is cynical. But even where the cynicism is not simply a cloak to cover confusion or a refusal to admit lack of understanding, it is normally only the result of an inner belief that he himself already knows the truth.*

> *There is really no better argument for my basic thesis than the existence of this pattern of behaviour despite all empirical evidence. It conjures up ...[a picture of]... addicts who cluster around roulette tables, obsessed with the attempt to discover the system that will ensure they make their fortunes*

... Unfortunately for their sense of objectivity the roulette-players, like the managers, have the occasional visible evidence of success. Some roulette players are bound to win, even among those who play systems. And each example of a successful player provides the kernel for the building of fresh legends to sustain the hopes of the addicts.

Similarly some businessmen are bound to succeed. Our society and our economy are structured in that way. And every company that succeeds, every entrepreneur that makes a fortune, provides further evidence for the belief that there must be a road to success, even if it is only the road of hard work and long hours. This, more than anything else, is the pathetic fallacy of the managerial group".

Cleverley (1971: 230-1)

Both management techniques and consultants add legitimacy and support for what a manager may want to do. In addition to providing a knowledge solution, the consultant also gives a chosen approach his blessing and "the mystical force of the right name". In a sense, he gives the manager the permission to go ahead. He justifies the manager's choice and shifts some of the responsibility for possible failure off the manager. Moreover, both consultants and their packages are replacable.

The discussion in this section highlights a great number of interesting avenues for research. However, it deals with the unconscious and perhaps irrational aspects of behaviour. To explain the adoption of certain management approaches and packages in terms of anxiety defences necessitates drawing upon psycho-analytical theory. The main authors in the field are Freud, Klein and Bion. The relevant concepts are identification, the unconscious, and anxiety and defence systems. The field consists of theories and concepts rather than experimentation.

Miner (1980) argued that hitherto in organizational behaviour, there had been a greater emphasis placed upon the charting of the domain of conscious, rational decision-making than upon the unconscious and the irrational. He

attributed this preference on the relative ease of measurement in the conscious domain. However, he felt that this represented a clear gap which needed filling.

CONCLUSION

The chapter has argued that the nature of managerial work in organizations creates a number of cognitive and emotional needs among those who occupy positions of responsibility in such institutions. One way in which such needs can be gratified is through the embracement and promotion of certain management ideas and their application through their associated techniques. These needs are constant and, in a way, are never satisfied. Temporary resolution is affected by a change in circumstances which pushes the situation for the manager into disequilibrium. It is for this reason that demand for management ideas will continue, at least in competitive capitalist societies. The next chapter picks up this theme and examines why apparently conflicting management ideas continue to co-exist, and why there continues to be a succession of management fads.

CHAPTER 7

SUCCESSION OF MANAGEMENT FADS

Introduction
Co-existence of competing management ideas
Succeeding management fads
Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

The managerial needs identified in the previous chapter are rarely if ever satisfied, due to the nature of organizational life. Nevertheless, this does not diminish the search by managers for ideas. The changes in fashion in ideas can be explained with reference to the process of management fad displacement. Because the problems which cause the needs, and the needs themselves remain broadly constant, the "new" solutions offered, in terms of management ideas and their associated techniques, are also similar to those which have preceded them. Thus, "old" products can be easily displaced with little psychological pain to managers, because the new ones are so similar. This chapter therefore addresses itself the question of changing fashions in management ideas. However, it first examines how seemingly contradictory management ideas seem able to happily co-exist, and then attempts to account for the process of management fad creation and replacement.

Much has been written about the way in which management ideas and their techniques have come in and gone out of fashion. Often they have been dubbed panaceas, fads or flavours-of-the-month. Byrne (1986: 61) noted that

> *"Today, the bewildering array of fads pose more serious diversions and distractions from the complex task of running a company. Too many modern managers are like compulsive dieters, trying the latest craze for a few days, then moving relentlessly on."*

Commenting on this almost aimless rush for instant solutions through the use of ever more ephemeral business fads, Horton (President of the American Management Association) said,

> *"If you tell me I can avoid a cold by taking half a pound of vitamin C, I'll want to believe you, even if it only gives me indigestion"*
> (quoted in Byrne, 1986: 54).

In fact, of the four types of idea-based techniques - devices, events, interventions and programmes - it is the training events and the OD-type interventions that have shown the greatest degree of variability over time. In comparison, teaching devices have been relatively stable, while system-wide programmes are rare. Thus a major question is to account for the rise and fall of these.

In order to do this, it is first necessary to consider the co-existence of the original management ideas upon which the different techniques are based. It is argued that, to some degree, virtually all of the techniques of the past, and those that continue to be developed from the basis of the six families of management ideas presented in Chapter 2. These six can be considered as the intellectual bank from which the producers of management techniques make withdrawals in order to produce what ultimately, may become the management fad of the future.

This chapter summarises the eight explanations that have been offered as to why widely differing and often mutually incompatible families of management ideas co-exist. It then goes on to argue that the phenomenon of management fad creation and replacement is the consequence of a complex interaction between management idea consumers and suppliers which operates at a number of different levels. Finally, it contends that the nature of organizational life in capitalist economies, coupled with the information gap between business academics and managers discussed in the previous chapter, will ensure that this cycle of management fads replacement will continue to be with us for the foreseeable future.

CO-EXISTENCE OF COMPETING MANAGEMENT IDEAS

Why have scientific management, administrative management, human relations, and the other families of management ideas, continued to exist alongside each other? Surely their prescriptions are contradictory in terms their recommendations? One might have expected that, with the possible exception of some historical interest, the newer ideas would replace older

ones. However, a review of any management textbook or training course brochure will reveal that this has not happened. This phenomenon was observed by Woodward (1965: 243). Commenting on the co-existence of classical administrative management and human relations she said that:

"At first sight it appears that the approach of the traditional social scientist [**human relations theory**] *is in conflict with the approach of the classical management theorist. Certainly two bodies of knowledge have been built up which to a considerable extent cancel each other out."*

Eight explanations have been offered to account for the continued co-existence of these different management ideas. These explanations are labelled wave, ideology, performativity, complementarity, territorial, marketplace, investment and no-criticism.

Wave explanation

The wave explanation for the co-existence of competing management ideas was offered by Watson (1986). He noted the practice of presenting management ideas as belonging to successive historical "schools", each of which "comes along" to discredit or displace what went before. This process of discreditation and displacement however did not mean the obliteration of what had been presented earlier. These older ideas in management thought continue to have a major impact on management thinking.

The reason for their continued presentation was the belief that the older ideas contained insights found valuable by managers and management teachers. Ideas from the past thus remained current long after their successors had hoped that they might have been buried. New ideas were like new waves upon the shore. They arrived and appeared to cover up those which had preceded them. The impact of each new wave however, did not

replace the impact of the wave that had preceded it. According to Watson, the waves clashed and merged with each other. Their effect on the shoreline was a function of this combined clashing and intermingling.

Ideology explanation

The ideology explanation of management idea co-existence was proposed by Anthony (1977: 261-2) who said that:

> *"A great deal of management education, that part of it concerned with behavioural science, is in fact, theocratic, it is designed to establish a unity of purpose and of values largely by providing managers with a common language, and a system of concepts. Management education is truly ideological in the sense that it aims to influence behaviour by inculcating beliefs and expectations".*

The dissemination of a management ideology by way of management education, said Anthony, had two latent effects. It helped to promote the internal solidarity of management, and it justified its authority over subordinates. He felt that the ideological function of management education could account for the astonishing absence of controversy in management education. In Anthony's view, many of the major contributions were based on uncertain theory, applied by questionable logic, to unrelated circumstances. Much of what passed for behavioural science in his estimation did not fulfil the most elementary validity of scientific method. The theories of science stood as long as researchers failed to *overthrow* them. In contrast, management theorists advanced theories which they claimed had been "proved" as a result of some hasty search for evidence that might *support* them. Mills (1959: 154) wrote how management ideology was justified:

"The whole growth of ideological work is based on the need for vested interests lodged in the new power centres to be softened, whitened, blurred, misinterpreted to those who serve the interests of the bureaucracies inside and to those in its sphere outside."

Anthony went on to argue that the methodological problems of behavioural science management ideas were compounded by the vulgarization of these ideas by consultants and their simplification by teachers. They had been processed into a form that could be transmitted to managers who totally lacked a behavioural science background. Perhaps this gives us an additional clue for the lack of controversy between ideas. It would be difficult to find another field of educational activity in which intelligent and sometimes educated minds were so harmoniously disposed. There may be an occasional disagreement about educational methods in management education but rarely about basic doctrine.

Performativity

Lyotard (1984) argued that the legitimation of scientific research lay increasingly in the concept of *performativity*. This view was grounded in the belief that the primary role of research was to create wealth and to furnish industry with methods and techniques that could be commercially exploited. This represented a shift away from the stress on falsification (as emphasised by Popper), away from the testing of each scientist's hypothesis, and away from debating the truth in relation to some referent of "reality". Instead, the discussion came to focus primarily on methods and techniques and the results which they generated. The results were pieces of information which existed in a limbo and lacked any theoretical context. The emphasis of techniques over questions led ultimately to a concern with not whether a statement was true or false, but with *what it is worth*.

The truth of a statement took a backseat and attention was shifted instead to defining and debating the performativity of the idea-technique. The methods which were the means to an end (and which were developed to test the validity of ideas) became instead ends in themselves. Attention turned

away from a consideration of the validity of the ideas, and towards their techniques (e.g. time-and-motion study, organizational charting, human relations training). Lyotard (1984:4) himself wrote about the "merchantalization of knowledge":

> "The relationship of the suppliers of knowledge and the users of knowledge, to the knowledge that they supply and use, is now tending, and will increasingly tend to assume the form already taken by the relation of commodity producers and consumers to the commodities that they produce and consume - that is, the form of value. Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange. Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its "use-value".

Complementarity

The complementarity explanation for the co-existence of management ideas was put forward by Woodward (1965) who stated that with the growth of management education, the social sciences contribution had come to be seen as complementing rather than contradicting, classical administrative management. She noted that the human relations movement which developed out of the Hawthorne studies, did not question the ideas of the classical administrative approach, but took the view that "modification had to be surpassed to allow for the fact that people act in response to other pressures." (Woodward, 1965: 243).

She argued that if the rules of classical administrative management did not work it was due to a failure of implementation or to the workers' ability to disrupt the carefully laid organizational plans. Thus, both sets of ideas were required. The manager needed to know about human behaviour in order to to implement and make classical administrative management rules work. The manager looked to the human relations writers to help him do this.

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Thus, classical administrative ideas provided managers with the basic goals, while human relations ideas contributed to the process of their implementation. The two were seen as complementary.

Territorial

The territorial explanation of co-existence was also proposed by Woodward (1965). She explained co-existence at the intellectual rather than the practical level. She argued that the phenomena to be explained by organizational theory were different from those to be explained by social science. By organizational theory she meant management theory which was held to focus on macro-organizational issues. Social science, she equated with human relations ideas. These she considered to be concerned with micro-political issues.

A second intellectual territorial separation occurred between the formal organization area (considered the proper concern of management or organization theorists) and the informal organization area (considered the proper subject for the social science theorists, that is, the human relationists). This system of academic separation resulted in the writers from one school of thought not referring to the contributions of those from the other school. Social scientists at the time, appeared to be prepared to accept informal organization as their own area of study. The analogy that one can made here is to the notion of non-competing groups in the labour market. The ideas do not displace each other because they are not perceived to be overlapping.

Marketplace

The marketplace explanation of co-existence sees any management education, training and development technique taking its place alongside the existing ones, rather like a product on the supermarket shelf. The continued demand for a technique is based on customer acceptance and satisfaction. Like soap powder, the customers like the widest choice.

Academics argue that the true test of a management idea should not be customer acceptance but the extent to which, in the case of a theory, standards such as correspondence to facts, coherence, parsimony, pragmatism and plausibility are attained. In such a context, the relationship between any two theories becomes an adversarial one. In the scientific environment heated debates can occur as new theories based on research evidence come to challenge and refute existing ones.

Settle (1971) argued that the key constituent of science was criticism. This critical-mindedness appeared to be lacking in the field of management education. In the absence of a critical tradition (one in which error and weakness were sought out), erroneous systems are readily excused, protected and perpetuated. The nature of scientific endeavour has been summarised in the following terms:

"... social science operates on the basis of standards, which apply to the definition of problems and terms, and to the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. Those standards are designed to achieve objectivity and repeatability of research, and are similar to the standards applied by natural scientists".

Huczynski and Buchanan (1982)

Korman and Vredenburgh (1984) pointed to the failure of the "self-correcting characteristics of scientific theory-hypothesis-testing model" in management research whereby the process of on-going research disconfirmed existing weak theories, and replaced them with better ones. These authors wrote that management theories which were supported by little or no evidence continued to dominate the management literature and continued to be written about and to influence the thinking of students and practitioners.

In management much has been made of "proven" ideas and techniques. The Popperian requirement of falsification was difficult to achieve. The two orientations, those of the researcher and the manager are diametrically

opposed here. The complexity of the research has made it easy for contradictory findings to be questioned and discounted. Existing management theories tend to command the "high ground", and are difficult to attack and dislodge. Consultants can claim that these theories have not really been disproved. Pinder (1977) commented on the low quality of social science research in general and expressed doubts as to whether theories of motivation deserved application in organizations at all.

Investment

The investment explanation of co-existence was offered by Korman and Vredenburgh (1984). They wrote about the personal investment of individual researchers in their previous writings. There were also the consultants who developed the different techniques around the management ideas and who needed to continue to sell their "product" (in the form of training events or OD interventions) in the market place. Once created, the management idea left the sphere of influence of its producers (usually the academics) and entered the world of management technique wholesalers and retailers. Knight (1975) made the point that once research findings were turned into a message and a marketable package, they were taken out of the research arena where ideas develop by being tested and disproved.

The productivization process turned the management idea into a product. A great deal of "value-adding" took place as college lecturers developed teaching devices such as notes, handouts and exercises to teach the material. Meanwhile, management consultants "packaged" the ideas with detailed documentation, and promoted them with glossy and expensive advertising. Not only did all this represent a significant investment of time and money amongst those involved, for many, it represented their livelihood.

Thus the self-correction process represented a threat to be resisted since it could reduce the life cycle of their product. Lorsch (1979) commented on how each set of ideas or each technique becomes almost a fad with its strong advocates promulgating its early successes. Then, as a growing number of companies tried the techniques, and as reports of failure and disappointment

mounted, the fad quickly died. This often repeated pattern has not, however, caused managers to lose interest in trying other management ideas which could help them.

Non-criticism

How does the lack of criticism of management ideas contribute to their co-existence? Business school academics, the producers of most management ideas are, according to Koontz (1961), unwilling to understand each other. They are reluctant to criticise each other's ideas since it is not good selling practice, to "knock" a competitor. Koontz attributed their unwillingness to integrate one set of ideas with another, to the walls created by the learned disciplines, to the fear that someone or some new discovery may encroach on one's professional or academic status, or to a fear of professional or technical obsolence. He urged such "cultists" to look at the approach and content of other views and exchange and understand them.

The criticism that one can make of Koontz is that he ignored the product nature of management knowledge. There are significant marketing advantages to having one's product incompatible with that of another company, as the manufacturers of the early personal computers knew. It locks the consumers into their system. It may be that at a later point in time, compatibility becomes an advantage and a UNIX-type standard in management ideas becomes established. Becker (1973: xi) argued that even where integration was sought, the process itself tended to create differentiation:

> "I have had the growing realization over the past few years that the problem's of man's knowledge is not to oppose and to demolish opposing views, but to include them in a larger theoretical structure. One of the ironies of this creative process is that it partly cripples itself in order to function. I mean that usually, in order to turn out a piece of work, the author has to exaggerate the emphasis of it, to

oppose it in a forcefully competitive way to other versions of truth; and to get carried away by his own exaggeration, and his distinctive image is built upon it. "

The product aspect of management ideas has a number of consequences. One of these is that the management consultants and the tutors who act as wholesalers of such devices, events, interventions and packages frequently overstate the potentcy of their products and services. Leaving out the "ifs" and "buts" from the original idea, they offer universal remedies claiming total effectiveness.

There are additional pressures on the producers of management ideas not to criticise each other. All are threatened by outside forces. Berger and Kellner (1981) have described the pressure on the social scientists to produce results or tools. Lyotard's (1984) arguments have already been stated in this context. On the other side, the retailers of the knowledge - the managers - actively seek out panaceas and, despite repeated disappointments continue to believe that social science is capable of producing magical solutions. These managers, said Knight (1975), wanted to be told exactly what was right and wrong, with total self assurance in words of one syllable. Such a human engineering approach, while leading managers to perpetual disenchantment, condemns them to wait continually for the next management idea to come along.

The criticisms that have been made of the most popular management ideas have merely been ignored. Blackler and Brown (1980: 162) gave the example of the criticisms that were made of job design theories. These were largely ignored by their developers. These authors cite the criticisms made by Braverman (1974) and Fox (1976) who argued that the job design changes typically proposed did not greatly affect the quality of workers' lives. These comments have prompted little response from the job design consultants.

Whichever explanation is the crucial one, one can see these different pressures working together to maintain in place the wide range of different management ideas, rather than acting to sort, sift and replace them. Attention now turns to an explanation of how the techniques based on these ideas, emerge and re-emerge as management fads.

SUCCEEDING MANAGEMENT FADS

Despite the interest in the timeless procession of business and management fads in the United States and Britain, no convincing explanation of the phenomena has yet been produced. This section of the chapter seeks to address itself to this topic. The popular business press has long acknowledged the existence of management fads. However, its attitude to them has been ambivalent. At different times it has reacted positively to them, congratulating their producers for developing and promoting innovative ideas. At other times it has criticised them for opportunism and selling their customers short.

Byrne (1986: 41) quoted one manager who stated, "... *last year it was quality circles ... this year it will be zero inventories. The truth is, one more panacea and we will all go nuts.*" Byrne's view was that the fads were counterproductive. The bewildering array of fads he perceived represented a serious distraction from the complex task of running a company. In contrast, Lee (1971) congratulated American top management for its willingness to experiment with modern human resource management, "*even though many such organizational experiments fail or offer questionable results.*" The risks, he admitted, could be quite high.

The dictionary defines a fad as a short lived but enthusiastically pursued practice or interest. The use of the verb pursue reminds one that "faddism" is a characteristic not of the technique (be it Management-by-Objectives or quality circles) but of its pursuers. That is, of the managers who consume it. Thus, to explain faddism in management ideas in general, and in their

associated techniques in particular, programmes, one needs to examine the motives and concerns of the managers-as-consumers and consultants-as-sellers.

Consumers

Why do managers buy training events, OD-type interventions and system-wide programmes?   A number of explanations can be offered which are grouped under the headings of organization, competition, individual and suppliers.

1.   Organization

The three explanations stress organizational issues and emphasise the role of new techniques to the internal functioning of the company.

(a)   Solutions to perceived critical company problems

The objectives of managers running companies within a capitalist economy are broadly the same (e.g. profitability, efficiency, effectiveness, market share).   The problems that they face have generally remained the same both between companies and over time (e.g. low output, low quality, high costs, absenteeism, turnover, union demands). What has tended to change has been managers' **perception** of the intensity of certain problems.   For example, in the United States, the growth of unionization under Roosevelt's "New Deal" demanded a company response in the form of the popularity of human relations management ideas and their associated techniques.   Once the short-lived problem had been overcome and the union threat declined, so did human relations ideas and techniques. Specific and intensely felt organizational problems might be regarded as the crests of waves in a sea of swirling flatness.   The techniques designed to solve these different and specific problems will themselves be specific and short lived, and thereby attract the charge of faddism.

(b)   Internal motivational device

It has been argued that companies use training events, interventions and programmes to keep their employees motivated. In the 1930s, Mayo discovered that the act of paying attention to workers affected their performance positively. In their research, Peters and Waterman (1982) were surprised "... *by the sheer number of people programmes we encountered and the frequency with which they were replenished and refurbished*" (p.242). They reported that service-incentive programmes were changed at least once a year by the excellent companies they studied to "keep them fresh." The people programmes used by these companies which involved incentives, training or "hoop-la" underwent continuous re-tuning, in much the same way that product development did. None of the companies expected their programmes to last forever, claiming and they had life-cycles just as products did, but these tended to be shorter:

> *"No one device ... even in the best institutions - is likely to be effective indefinitely. The point is to treat the problem as one would the new product challenge. The pipeline must always be filled with the next score of candidate programmes."*

Peters and Waterman (1982: 242)

There are numerous past examples of people programmes which were launched in a blaze of publicity so as to gain employee interest. Motorola's "Participative Management Programme", Data General's "Pride Teams" and Honeywell's "Positive Action Teams" are all examples.

(c)   Novel solutions to continuing problems and objectives

Given the nature of organizations in a capitalist society, the message that the company wants to get over to employees will relate to the necessity for profitability, productivity and quality of work. This will tend to be fundamentally the same from year to year. Both managers and workers will tire of the same old approaches. They are likely to be receptive to new ways

of achieving fundamentally the same old business objectives. This does not mean that the old approaches are incorrect, only that they may be seen as boring. Managers seek new answers to old questions that do not depend on past explanations. From this perspective, the termination of a technique, or more accurately its exhaustion over a period of time, is not considered as unusual and to label it a failure, may be inaccurate.

(d)   Change aid vehicle

Management techniques generally seek to produce not only behavioural changes but also attitudinal ones. An intervention technique such as a quality circles programme might have a higher order objective than just reducing the reject rate. For example, the aim might be to achieve flexible manning. Where the purpose is to achieve a major organization change oriented to the future, it would be incongruous for the company to use an old intervention from the past in order to motivate those affected by the changes. New techniques were needed for new changes.

2.   **Competition**

(a)   Fear of the competition

Kanter (1985: 181) suggested that organizations were forced to pay attention to and experiment with anything, however strange, that might offer a solution to the many problems that beset them. To ignore any potential source of ideas meant giving the competition an advantage. Grayson and O'Dell (1988) explained that managers were under pressure, to show that they are "doing something" and techniques such as employee involvement programmes provided excellent material for slide presentations at quarterly meetings. Newstrom (1985: 3) echoed the same point:

> "... *organizations are clearly searching for something - anything, that will help to increase the effectiveness of their supervisory, managerial and executive staffs. This phenomenon (desperate*

searching) has been reinforced by mounting pressure placed on organizations by the demand for productivity improvements and the impact of the economic recession of recent years."

What is seen as the appropriate solution is decided by imitation at the national or organizational levels. In the 1970s, West Germany and Sweden were promoted as models to be emulated. At the same time, Ford and ICI, both large unionized companies were also considered to have discovered the secrets of success. By the 1980s, Japan had become the country to be emulated while the small, non-unionized companies were seen to be the way forward.

(b)   <u>Being ahead of the competition</u>

A second variant on the competition theme was when a company wished to promote an image of itself as go-ahead - in the eyes of its customer or employees or both. In such circumstances it would not make sense for it to adopt a previously tried intervention. Instead it would be searching to pick up the latest idea ahead of its competitors. It could then claim to be far-sighted by being amongst the pioneers with respect to the introduction of some technique.

(c)   <u>Fear of the customer</u>

The above explanation emphasises the concern that a company has with respect to its competitors. It wants to match the competition in terms of any possible advantage accruing from any new technique. This explanation is not concerned with benefits (actual or potential) but with perceptions. The success of the technique itself is irrelevant. Instead, the company considers how a customer might view it if it were <u>not</u> seen to be using a technique. Thus a company may introduce a quality circle programme to signal to its customers that it is concerned with quality. Its motivation is not to be seen to be ignoring this fashion, irrespective of whether or not it works.

3.   Individual

(a)   Role legitimation

Any technique will be introduced into an organization by a "champion" who promotes its adoption.   The effect of this is that the visibility of the person doing the championing is increased within the company.   Moreover, this demonstrates to others that he or she is creative and is actively seeking improvements.

Thackray (1986) reported that one of the effects of increased interest in the concept of corporate culture was that it significantly raised the status of the human resource management department and that of personnel teams. Overnight these individuals became culture managers and interpreters. Technique implementation stimulates empire building which can help managers to advance their careers. It increases the opportunities for minions to rise to heights which, under normal circumstances would be beyond their capabilities.   It also gives employees the opportunity to ingratiate themselves with their superiors (Jones and Kirby, 1985).

(b)   Manager defence

Heller (1986: 310) argued that no management could be blamed for failure due to lack of knowledge. However, no management could be excused for a failure to implement an available technique which could be learned by sitting at the feet of the relevant guru.   While the manager may not be an apostle of enlightened management, he could qualify as an enlightened executive, and thus cover himself against the charge that he had not found out the current wisdom, evaluated or implemented it experimentally. Ritti and Funkhauser's (1987: 63) summarised the point:

> *"Place yourself in the position of a mid-level manager of an organization. Things aren't going too well for you. Productivity is lagging. What could be the problem? Something you haven't done? Certainly not! No, it's those employees out there. They're just not motivated. So the answer is to start up a motivation programme.*

That ought to do the trick. And look what you accomplish with this. First, the problem is acknowledged and officially identified as a problem of individuals, not of the management system. Next, you can pat yourself on the back for having taken corrective action. Crisp, hard-hitting decision-making. You've gotten yourself a big name "motivation consultant" (talk funny, make money) and you'll put a programme in place. There, that should take care of it."

(c)   <u>Search for quick results</u>

Mayer (1983:23) identified another individual motivation to adopt the latest fad. He wrote:

"Many of today's managers, though they may deny or not realize it, are members of a flourishing movement I call "the Panacea Conspiracy". These managers typically promoted into management from such technical specialties as engineering or law, or finance, have little managerial know-how. Most don't have the time, interest, or awareness needed to learn their new craft, but they are anxious to produce immediately. What they are looking for, although they may profess to know better, are quick-fix solutions to dynamic complex problems."

Mayer implied that the adoption of a technique by this type of manager was a defensive act, that is, the manager was defending himself against his ignorance. It might equally represent a form of pseudo-participation with respect to employees.   Mant (1979: 55) *"wrote that managers constantly sought new techniques since workers have wised up to one [technique] ... and need outfoxing with something a lot cleaver ... It is an alluring message for the naturally exploitative executive who wants to sleep at night."*   Williamson (1978: 6) wrote in a similar vein, saying that *"the more people grasp one theory, the more urgent it becomes to manufacture a different model, fast, so that you are still ahead in the great race to be ahead."*

(d)   <u>Insider-outsider</u>

This explanation of adoption has also been described as "me-too-ism." Managers and trainers who adopt new training devices or interventions can be seen to be up-to-the-minute. The concept of reference group is central here. Such groups either directly or indirectly influence a person's behaviour or attitude. According to marketing theory, in the introductory phase of the product life cycle, the decision to buy the new product is heavily influenced by others. In the market growth stage the group influence is strong on both product and brand choice. In the product maturity stage, brand choice and not product choice are heavily influenced by others. In the decline stage, group influence is weak on both.

Thus the sellers of management products are likely to initially target those individuals who are opinion formers in the relevant groups. Once ICI, IBM and similar companies have adopted a quality awareness programme, the remaining companies follow suit. Battalia and Tarrant (1973) felt that the manager had to be up on all the latest terms and be abreast of all the newest enthusiasms.

When someone used the latest catchphrase over the lunchtable or at a conference, he had to recognize it and be able to respond in kind. They added, however, that such a response need not imply understanding. Exhibit 7.1 summarizes the point neatly.

Organizational Research. Source Jules Pfeiffer,
"Sick, Sick, Sick", 1959
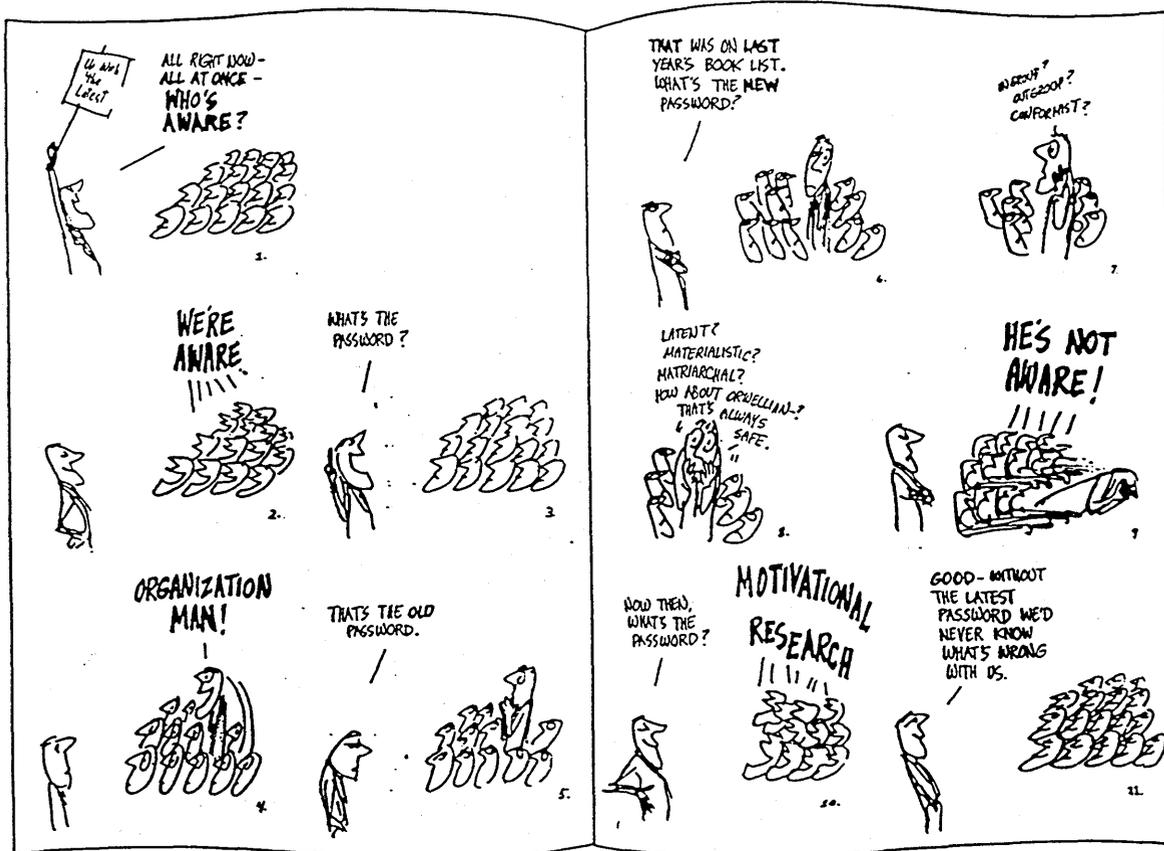
Mayer (1983) argued that panaceas usually did little more than produce
more panaceas, each with their own proponents, literature and markets.
Those attracted by the latest trick promoted it, and the more successful
panaceas became stylish. Eventually however, their shortcomings became
evident and they either faded away or some parts of them became
incorporated into the day-to-day fabric of the organization. Campbell (1971:
565-6) argued that:

"The fads centre around the introduction of new techniques and follow a characteristic pattern. A new technique appears on the horizon and develops a large stable of advocates who first describe its "successful" use in a number of situations. A second wave of advocates busy themselves trying out numerous modifications of the basic technique. A few empirical studies may be carried out to demonstrate that the method 'works'. Then the inevitable backlash sets in, and a few vocal opponents begin to criticise the usefulness of the technique, most often in the absence of data. Such criticism typically has very little effect. What does have an effect is the appearance of another new technique and a repetition of the same cycle."

4.   Suppliers

What factors stimulate the continued replacement of one management idea by another? The topic can be considered under the heading of planned obsolence and of searching and deciding on techniques.

Planned obsolence

A producer can enter the management idea market with the confidence that a particular product which is selling well today will be displaced at a future time. This involves totally withdrawing the product, and replacing it with something else. Thus some wholesalers currently promoting "wellness programmes" acknowledge the limited time application of their product. The president of the PA Executive Research Group estimated that wellness programmes would have a 2-3 year life cycle. One can contrast this strategy with the re-launchung an old product (The NEW Management Grid) or extending its target population. Forrest was cynical about this process, while Peters and Waterman(1982) described it in depth:

"The progress of the 'behavioural sciences' is inexorable and accelerated. You are unlikely to keep up. Should you threaten to catch up, we will define what we gave you as passe and give you something new. Should we run out of new stuff, which is not very likely, we will change the name of something we have already promoted to you as 'the answer', and which we have displaced with some 'new answer', and then give it to you again."

Forrest (1984: 54)

"Our objective is first and foremost to have a steady flow of new products. Then, once we hit, we expect to dominate the niche, sometimes for three or four years. During that stretch we price according to full value to the customer. We're providing both a tool that is some kind of labour saver and we expect the market to pay what it's worth. Sure we create an umbrella. But when others come in with approximations, perhaps at lower cost, rather than fight them for share, we usually give in - that is, get out. Because by then we're developing the next several generations of products for the market and others."

Peters and Waterman (1982: 184)

Gellner (1985: 205) offered an explanation of the relationship between success and failure and between truth and fallacy in his examination of the psychoanalytic movement. He explained that truth was not an advantage in producing a burning belief in a theory or idea. Truth was unpatentable. Once it was revealed, and once the important secret of effectiveness became revealed, the attempt to protect and monopolize it became impossible. However, while truth might be unpatentable, a type of falsehood which contained some genuine attraction and genuine offence, was self-patenting, and constituted the elements of which a strongly held and popular management belief system was made.

Applying Gellner's ideas to two management interventions - A and B, one might find that intervention A produced a productivity increase in 80% of companies who used it by a publicly testable method. In contrast, intervention B only achieved a 20% success rate by an esoteric, invisible and unspecifiable method which was accompanied by some emotional activity. It was likely, argued Gellner, that intervention A would spread rapidly, but the publicity of the method ensured that no magic would be attached to it. It could be freely emulated by anyone. It generated no offence and no transference. Interventions such as management-by-objectives, job enrichment and quality circles might come into this category.

In contrast, intervention B generated both offence and transference. It made its enemies amongst disappointed clients who did not fall into the lucky 20% for whom it worked. Those in the fortunate group was not only be grateful, but would also become bound to the intervention and its practitioners. The lucky 20% cannot be identified in advance. Since intervention B was untestable, it tied adherents to their implementing consultants by faith. If they spread the word, 20% of those whom they contact would become converts. Given the consequences of exponential growth, the intervention B "movement" would grow, despite feeling under attack, and just like the Christian persecuted in Roman times, this will help morale and attract disciples. Thus the ability of an intervention to arouse emotional opposition seems to be of crucial importance. Intervention A with its 80% success rate would become common property and would engender no movement at all. A training device such as Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) might be an example of this type of intervention.

(b)   Searching and deciding on techniques

Heller (1986) concluded that certain techniques could work wonders in individual companies at particular times. In his view this was because they suited the way in which individual managers liked to act in particular markets. The successful techniques used in one company, he felt, could paralyse another. Yet managers beset by corporate ailments, reached out for techniques (events, interventions and programmes) formed in a different context as if these were antibiotic cure-all, wonder drugs. So the question is

asked how extensively do managers search for the techniques based upon management ideas, and where do they obtain their information about their efficacy?

In Britain, according to Blagden (1980), managers read 7.8 hours per week. Their main reading was the "Financial Times" and "Management Today". These two publications were read by more managers than all the remaining ones put together. The Blagden research supported March and Simon's (1958) notion of limited search as it applied to management ideas and techniques. The narrowness of the reading suggested that managers scanned their environment for techniques in a limited way. Janis and Mann (1977) also supported this conclusion arguing that individuals tended to avoid cognitive strain by considering a restricted number of alternatives and frequently only one. Acceptability was decided on the basis of whether the choice was "good enough". Simple decision rules were used such as "consult an expert and do what he says". This non-vigilent decision-making strategy was used when the decision was reversible. Becker (1973: x) suggested why this should be so:

> *"The man of knowledge in our time is bowed under a burden he never imagined he would have, the over-production of truth that cannot be consumed. For centuries man lived in the belief that truth was slim and elusive and that once he found it, the troubles of mankind would be over. And here we are in the closing decades of the twentieth century choking on truth."*

A second finding was that once the search for a tool had been simplified and limited information obtained on each alternative, the decision process itself was simplified. Disproportionate weight was given to certain variables. Four such tests or decision rules were used by managers. Under pressure they would make accept-reject decisions on the basis of only one criterion. Clearly, such extreme simplification had consequences for the entire marketing and buying process. For example, it would appear that vendors of management packages must keep their positioning strategies simple by

providing their customers with strong and uncomplicated propositions. Detail was dysfunctional. Managers fought to stop themselves being deluged by details.

Schwenk (1986) in his empirical study of how managers processed information, identified the various simplifying strategies or rule-of-thumb biases which they used to reduce the amount of information they needed to consider in decision making. He discovered that disproportionately large amount of weight was given to vivid anecdotal information about individuals and companies and a small amount to pallid statistical information (Borgida and Nisbett, 1977). The message to influencers was that they should use anecdotal information which was both vivid and salient; which was consistent or which presented a consistent picture, and which would discourage decision-makers from seeking any other information. Thus, John De Lorean attempted to increase the salience of information about himself, so as to encourage a kind of representativeness heuristic which reduced listeners' motivation to seek out and use other types of data with which to evaluate him and his project proposals.

Schwenck (1986) also discovered that large volumes of anecdotal information relating to a particular choice, increased decision-makers confidence in their choice by increasing the number of reasons for confidence available in memory. A consultant or company seeking to sell a management tool or technique should take positive action to create and maintain commitment to a course of action by the potential customer (the prospect). Since the vendor controlled much of the information received by the prospect, he could manipulate this information to increase the prospect's confidence in a course of action and his commitment to it. Companies selling management tools could provide a large amount of vivid, anecdotal information about themselves thereby producing a consistent picture of themselves in the prospect's eyes, and drawing the attention away from statistical information about the probability of success with a tool such as a quality circle or a training course.

The provision of this type of information could encourage the representative heuristic among the prospects, and would tend to make them overconfident in their decisions. By focusing on information about the consultant or the

vendor company, the prospect would get an "illusion of control" over the circumstances. This in turn would lead to higher levels of commitment to the course of action. Initial evidence suggests that package-adopting or consultant-engaging managers use a satisficing rather than a maximising decision approach. There is relatively little in the way of either detailed evaluation or comparative research. Impulse-buying appears to be frequent. Discussing how the management consultant Ichak Adizes came to be involved with Bank of America, Byrne noted that:

> *"The banker [Armacost] was introduced to the Yugoslavian-born consultant by board director Charles R. Schwab in 1983 via cassette tape. Armacost, says Adizes, listened to his 'Adizes Method Audio Series' until 2 a.m. one night and was so impressed that he arranged a retreat with the consulting whiz for top management ..."*

Byrne (1986: 47)

Casey and Pierce offer a similar description of how Arnold Weinstock of GEC adopted action learning as the favoured management development approach for his company:

> *"In the autumn of 1973, I watched Revans on television illustrating the theories and practice of action learning. He and I met subsequently and embarked on an action learning programme for some managers in GEC."*

Weinstock in Casey and Pierce (1977: ix)

Armacost and Weinstock are examples of people who acted primarily on their own faith in the product. As believers, they made little effort to seek alternatives. In their minds they may "test" one approach with another but only in terms of its face-validity and intuitive appeal.

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CONCLUSION

This description of consumer motives suggests that fads are cyclical in their nature and that faddism is in fact a good thing given the purposes that consumers put the techniques to. There appear to be a finite number of solutions on offer. There are only so many ways in which organizational performance can be improved. These basic solutions are frequently up-dated, branded and claimed to be "new", but are in fact reformulated versions of the six management idea systems described earlier in Chapter 2, and whose co-existence was explained in this chapter.

Technical solutions started with scientific management extended through computerization, quantitative management, zero-based budgeting, robotics, materials requirement planning, and just-in-time working. **Structural** solutions started with bureaucracy and classical administration management and have extended to diversification, centralization, matrix management, decentralization, conglomeration, and re-structuring. **Employee-focused** solutions began with the human relations ideas and were succeeded by neo-human relations, management-by-objectives, T-groups, job enrichment, "management-by-walking about" and quality circles. **Customer-focused** solutions, concerned primarily with delivering better quality products and services to consumers, are perhaps the only true innovation in management techniques in the last seventy years. These have taken the form of customer care programmes, vendor improvement programmes, and company-wide quality improvement programmes.

One therefore finds old, modified techniques being offered as solutions to organizational problems. Quality circles for example, can be seen as a modified version of the employee-focused technique of worker involvement. Peters (Lorenz, 1986b: 8) was reported as saying about his book that:

> " ... *there's absolutely nothing new whatsoever between the covers. It was a translation of ideas and materials that had been around for up to 50 years. All it added was brilliant timing and packaging.* "

It can be observed that the failure of successive techniques does nor appear to deter organizations from seeking new ones. Indeed, in some circumstances, failure may increase rather than decrease such a search. Peters and Waterman (1982), who were responsible for releasing numerous fads on to the market, reflected critically that:

> *"Ten years ago it was job enlargement. Before that it was the seemingly ubiquitous organizational development movement replete with teambuilding, T-groups, conflict resolution and managerial grids. The bones of these programmes are scattered on America's low productivity desert."* (p. 241)

> *"... most ... [of the programmes] will turn out to be duds, just as do new product ideas. If job enrichment does not work at the Milwaukee plant, try seven other programmes that are working in other plants, or that have worked at other plants."* (p. 242)

For the purposes for which they are used, the replacement, sometimes a rapid replacement, of techniques is necessary. This assumes that such techniques have objectives other than merely performance improvement. Even in this area there are forces which will lead to their eventual replacement. Watson (1986) commented upon the "paradox of consequences" which held that all personnel procedures contained the seeds of their own destruction. This was because they all involved the human element. Individuals and groups brought their own values, interests and aspirations to bear upon any activity with which they became involved, for example, quality circles.

Management had to constantly monitor and modify personnel systems and systems to avoid too high a degree of entrenchment and inflexibility as people established a personal or sectional stake in the pattern which was set up, thereby compromising the effectiveness of the procedure as a means of fulfilling managerial purposes which did not coincide with those of employees. Thus for example, a new wage payment system might bring

order to the bargaining activity of a company. But unless it is monitored and revised, it could create particular expectations among individuals and groups which might become major constraints on the organizational changes which might later be required.

This meant that there would never be the right technique or system. Whatever intervention was introduced, this would have to be modified, adjusted or replaced as its internal contradictions broke through. Henstridge (1975) pointed out how in the personnel management field, a succession of reasons was given by practitioners as to why certain procedures and policies had been initiated, altered, adjusted, dropped, or made more flexible. The explanations were of the following type: *"We tried this but it did not work", "we had to think of something to deal with that", "we do it this way here because", "we had trouble with the unions so".* Every manager felt himself forced or pressured into developing a unique, contingent approach to meet the problems of the particular situation.

Marglin (1979) offered an explanation of the succession of management fads from a Marxist perspective. He argued that conflict was inherent in the private ownership of the means of production. Specific manifestations of such conflicts in the work situation required institutional changes to allow the system to function. Since the basic features of capitalism had to be respected (e.g. division of labour; organizational hierarchy; top-down control) the solutions that could be offered to address these problems were necessarily limited. The solutions proposed addressed the problems only at the surface level. For example, dealing with the symptoms rather than the causes. Moreover, they tended to change the <u>form</u> of the problem for management rather than to resolve it in any fundamental sense. The solution to one problem tended to exacerbate other problems, or created a totally new one. The process according to Marglin was was a dialectic one. Problems led to solutions which led to new problems.

Having completed the literature reviews, attention is turned to testing some of the hypotheses generated. The next chapter therefore considers the research design and methods to be employed.

CHAPTER 8

RESEARCH METHOD RATIONALE

Intoduction

Phenomenological versus positivist approaches

Key concepts in phenomenology

Phenomenological Research Methods

Research design and methods

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

This chapter puts forward the rationale for the choice of research approach. It begins by contrasting phenomenological with positivist approaches. It considers the implications of these differences for the research design and methodology of the research. It then goes on to define and illustrate the key phenomenological concepts to be used. These are consciousness (noema/ noesis), life-world, intersubjectivity, natural attitude, stocks of knowledge and experience. The phenomenological method is examined in relation to two further concepts of epoch and eidetic reduction. It is stressed that there is not a single, universally accepted, phenomenological research method. Instead, there are a number which fulfil the requirements of, and are sympathetic, to a phenomenological approach.

The thesis concerns itself with considering the meanings that managers give to management ideas and techniques. The application of the phenomenological approach to the examination of meanings is not new. Other social analysis disciplines have considerable experience with research methods which allow the researcher to enter into the actor's meaning structure. Cultural anthropology or ethnology, interpretative or phenomenological sociology and psychiatry have all used these approaches. Within phenomenology there is no single method of investigation. Instead one finds a range of different research designs and methods which can be identified as being located within the phenomenological tradition.

The relationship between phenomenological and positivist oriented research methods will be examined in this chapter. The analysis will show that the two approaches view the social world differently, are directed at different objectives, and cannot be judged by the same research criteria. The positivistic method is there to test whether our hypotheses can be brought into a discipline's established body of knowledge, while the phenomenological method seeks to elicit hypotheses about its own situation. Once the differences of research approach and method are clarified, then the subsidiary issues of research structure and procedure, and the question of the derivation, validation and utilization of results become much clearer. Phenomenological methods require the researcher, having investigated the

subject's rationality, to re-enter his original rationality with something that can be shared with his audience. Otherwise there will be no results. The difficulty of that journey to and from that target rationality has been underestimated by many methodologists who merely treat positivist and phenomenological approaches are alternative routes to basically the same research objective.

Phenomenology is the philosophical movement which simultaneously seeks to leave, and to ground itself in the world of concrete existence. From a phenomenological perspective, man is viewed as possessing consciousness and being intentional, temporal, and in-the-lived-world (Lebenswelt). His is shaped by, and at the same time shapes, his world (Lynch-Sauer, 1981: 3-4). From his perspective, the task of phenomenology is to make explicit the implicit structure and meanings of human experience. To investigate the descriptive content of conscious phenomena and of consciousness itself (Atkinson, 1972). Phenomenology has been described as a descriptive philosophy which offers a form of analysis which leads to the description of the essential structure of phenomena. Protocol analysis method is one of the means by which phenomenological research is conducted.

The development of the phenomenological tradition is attributed to the work of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) (see Macquarrie, 1973; Farber, 1966). Phenomenology accepts an individual's subjective experience of the world as representing a valid source of knowledge about the phenomenological world. The approach investigates conscious phenomenal experience, that is, "... *the way in which things or experiences show themselves in, or as, consciousness."* (Sanders, 1982: 354).

Philosophy itself recognises varying typologies of knowledge and the different bases upon which these are formulated. Phenomenology deals largely with subjective stocks of knowledge built from experience. This represents an appeal to Polanyi's (1966) "theory of tacit knowledge" which itself borrows from Gestalt psychology. Tacit knowledge is knowledge gained from experience and includes a multiple of "inexpressible associations" (basically non-propositional) which are capable of giving rise to a host of new

meanings, ideas and applications. In other words, the theory of tacit knowledge does not require things, objects or events to be empirically verifiable. It thus offers an alternative epistemology.

PHENOMOLOGICAL VERSUS POSITIVISTIC APPROACHES

The phenomenological tradition has influenced a wide range of social science traditions. It is represented within each of them by a different label. In psychology one finds "psychological phenomenology" or the "psychology of personal constructs" (Kelly, 1955; Bannister and Fransella, 1980); in sociology and social psychology one has it represented in the work of "action theory" (Silverman, 1970); "symbolic interaction" (Blumer, 1969; Shibutani, 1973), "cognitive sociology" (Cicourel, 1973) and "ethnomethodology" (Garfinkel, 1967). Despite their different disciplines, labels and nonclamenture, these different authors all agree that intentional human behaviour (labelled "action") arises not from the mere existence of objects or phenomena, but from individual subjective meaning-interpretation and meaning-establishment (Schutz 1972).

This phenomenological stance can be contrasted with the positivist research tradition which is associated with the nineteenth century French sociologist August Comte. Positivism sees the world as having placed in it (or posited) objective phenomena which are observable. Hence objective "facts" about such objects may be logically deduced and can represent a basis for the sound construction or development of a knowledge of reality. Some branches of positivism, such as that behaviourism represented by Skinner (1953), argue that that which cannot be objectively observed cannot be subjected to measurement with scientific instruments. From this it follows, to a behaviourist, that any theory or explanation of reality that is not based on the observable is, by definition, metaphysical and hence speculative and even dubitable.

Positivist "scientific-ness" can be illustrated by reference to the observation that a certain person shows happiness when he is in a particular physical place. Scientifically, it is concluded that place and behaviour are correlated. Both are observable phenomena. The positivist may even attempt a causal explanation arguing that a certain place **causes** the person to be happy. However, the positivist who rushes to connect object and subject in this way is not providing a convincing theory or generalization. This is because he brings with him to his study, his own assumptions, beliefs and pre-suppositions which are contained in his observation and question schedules. He 'naively' establishes causal relationships by a form of commonsensical, logico-deductive approach.

From the phenomenological perspective, the weakness in the positivist approach is the omission of the subject's consciousness which is equated with experience. This point is made in Kohak's (1978) translation of Husserl's work and that of Schutz (1972). The constituent elements of consciousness/ experience include not only the individual "seeing" an object (this is the mere registration of an object on the retina of the eye), but also perception, attitudes, reflection, comparison, remembering, as well as affects and emotions. All these elements constitute consciousness or experience.

Social science operates on the basis of standards which apply to the definition of problems and terms, and to the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. These standards are designed to achieve objectivity and repeatability in research. They are similar to the standards applied by natural scientists. Human beings attach meanings and purposes to their behaviour. We are "self-interpreting". Objects in the natural world are not capable of interpreting their actions in this way. Social scientists thus have to work with the interpretations that their subjects make of what they are doing. Thus the research methods of social scientists need to be responsive to this crucial characteristic.

In contrast, natural scientists do not face this self-interpretation complication. They can study how a car rusts badly without asking why it rusts. In contrast, a social scientist cannot stop at describing how a car assembly worker goes on strike. That would be of limited interest. He has to take a step that the natural scientist cannot take and ask **why** he has taken

such action. Thus the notions of cause and effect that are critical to our understanding of the natural world are therefore inappropriate for explaining, predicting or controlling human behaviour. Such interpretations are not a good basis for accurate prediction about human behaviour in organizations or elsewhere.

The following figures illustrate the difference between positivist and phenomenological modes of explaining or describing the reality of experience.

Positivist:

$$\boxed{\text{Object}} \longleftrightarrow \boxed{\text{Subject}} \longrightarrow \text{Behaviour}$$
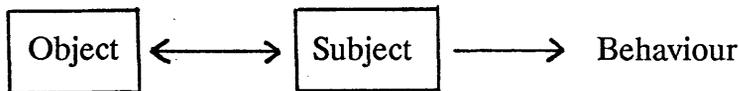
This position takes a linear relationship, that is, the presence of an objective is held to induce (i.e. be correlated with or cause) the behaviour of the subject. The phenomenologist rejects such a view and argues that human consciousness (intentionality) mediates between objects and behaviour.

Phenomenologist:

$$\boxed{\text{Object}} \longleftrightarrow \boxed{\text{Consciousness}} \longrightarrow \boxed{\text{Subject}} \longrightarrow \text{Behaviour}$$
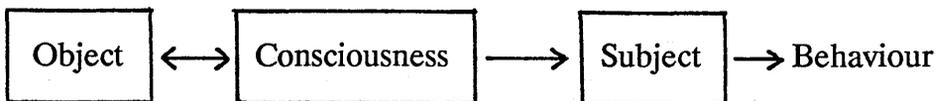
A two-way relationship is hypothesised. The subject reacts to an object (person, place, document, idea or situation) interprets it, establishes a meaning for it, and acts in accordance with the meaning assigned. An individual's behaviour is the result of the meaning that his conscious experience gives to the object. His actions are not induced by the mere presence of the object. Between the object and the situation is, as it were,

the individual's subjective experience. It is this "black box" which attributes meanings to objects. The recognition of the role played by the intermediary process of consciousness in the object-subject-behaviour relationship acts to weaken the positivist position in relation to the use of research approaches in situations where human intentionality/consciousness ("meaning-giving") is involved (Burgoyne and Hodgson, 1982).

Consciousness is demonstrated by perception, reflection, remembering, comparing, evaluation, imagining and attitudes. These can collectively be referred to as the process by which human beings give meaning to the objects in their environment. For Husserl (1931) the meanings-in-consciousness and behaviour were inseparable. In his terms, they were but the subjective and objective aspects of the same thing which he labelled "empirical subjectivity". Schutz (1972) stated that action was defined by meaning. To re-state the basic phenomenological position, behaviour is not held to be related directly to objects, but rather objects are processed and are given meanings in consciousness before behaviours towards them are enacted. The figure below summarizes this idea.
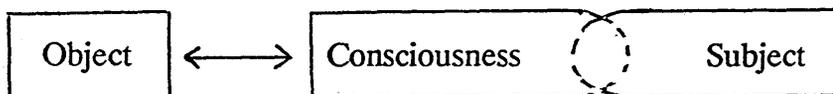
The key point about this intermediary process is that it cannot be empirically verified. Here one comes up against the positivists' objection to what they consider the irrational process of individual subjective experience. However, what they are unable to explain is why the same person in the same environment behaves differently at different times in the presence of the same object. Or why different people react differently to the same object in the same environment.

The phenomenologist therefore goes beyond the positivist to seek out the "essence" of experience. In the phenomenological sense, essence refers to the 'overtness' and a bringing out to light. Thus the "essence of experience"

refers to how experience or consciousness shows itself. Put another way, it deals with *"how a phenomenon presents itself in experience"* since the *"reality of a phenomenon is reality-in-experience"* (Kohak, 1978: 53).

The process of delving into consciousness in order to understand how experiences show themselves is referred to as **eidetic reduction** (Sanders, 1982). Sometimes the phrase "phenomenological seeing" is also used to refer to the same thing. Phenomenological seeing is not causal, but rather *"is a matter of looking, looking again, then again, each time with greater precision until we reach a clear evident grasp"* (Kohak, 1978: 23). One can therefore say that phenomenology seeks to understand the world of phenomena by looking into individual's consciousness to see how objects, ideas or behaviours show themselves. Second, although phenomenology is "subjective", that subjectivity is not private since experience is shareable. For these reasons, the phenomenological approach is particularly appropriate for understanding the value assigned by managers to certain ideas.

KEY CONCEPTS IN PHENOMENOLOGY

Having contrasted the positivist with the phenomenological approach, the task is now to consider some of the key concepts involved. The phenomenological approach emphasises an essentially subjective social world. It attempts to understand how such a world is construed and experienced by participants (Hopper and Power, 1984; Putman, 1982). The everyday social world is treated as the *"product of human activity, interpretation and intention, as a subject world"* (Smart 1976: 75). It is also a linguistic and cognitive world. Man is shown to live in a world created through consciousness.

Ontologically the world constitutes a "stream of consciousness; it is experiential; the subjective is the source of all objectivities" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The great strength of a phenomenologically-informed

perspective lies in its point of departure. It sets out to describe the experiences of the world of everyday life. Curtis and May (1978: xiii) identify the common and distinguishing features of phenomenology as being:

(a)   *A belief in the importance, and in a sense the primacy of subjective consciousness;*

(b)   *An understanding of consciousness as active, as meaning bestowing.*

(c)   *A claim that there are essential structures to consciousness of which we can gain direct knowledge by a certain kind of reflection.*

One can therefore see that, as a theory, phenomenology concerns itself with the structure and function of consciousness. Luckmann (1978: 9) stated that the *"goal of phenomenology was to describe universal structures of the subjective orientation in the world, not to explain the general features of the objective world".* The central tenets which are used in phenomenology to describe the structure of this subjective and social world are now briefly introduced.

Consciousness (Noema/noesis)

Man has one basic and distinguishing characteristic, that is, his consciousness. Descartes famous maxim "cognito, ergo sum" recognises consciousness (cognito) as a basic irreducable fact of which man could be certain. Husserl (1931) extended the statement to include the object of consciousness (the cognitatum). Consciousness makes present phenomena which "show themselves' or which are 'revealed' in the process of being conscious.
The process of being conscious can take many forms - thinking, perceiving, reflecting, imagining. However, it is always directed at something (books, events, people). Thus all consciousness is consciousness of. Every conscious act has an object (Atkinson, 1972: 262). Consciousness is therefore

characterized by intentionality. The world is understood as a correlate of consciousness. Consciousness, in its acts and manifestations, is essentially directed towards the world. All its acts have both a *"subjective pole, conscious of itself, and an objective pole, the world"* (Spurling, 1977: 7).

Intentionality implies both "consciousness of objects" and "objects of consciousness" (Rogers, 1983). Phenomenologists are concerned to describe both these aspects of consciousness. To focus on the consciousness of a given object is to describe the noesis of the act (i.e. the subjective perceiving, reflecting, remembering). When the focus is upon the given "object of experience". the description is about the noema of the act (i.e. the object that is being perceived, reflected upon, remembered). In short, the noema is the "object-in-relation-to-the-subject" and the noesis is the "subject-in-relation-to-the-object" for each particular act of intentional consciousness (Atkinson, 1972: 279). Neither can exist without the other, and no experience can exist without both.

The noesis bestows the meaning while the noema is the meaning which is established by the noesis of a given act (Rogers, 1983; Filmer et al. 1972). These complementary aspects of intentionality describe the meaning-giving features of consciousness. This can be represented as follows:

(I) noesis ----------------> noema

Here, noema stands for what is being experienced (e.g. anger, frustration) and I is the bearer of the experience. It is the "I" who does the experiencing (Ihde, 1977). The contents of consciousness can be described as the outer world (objective) correlates or the inner (subjective) correlates of consciousness. However, consciousness can contact a given object with a variety of noesis, and the same object, e.g. a photograph can be revealed or constituted in many possible ways.

Whatever appears to a person is always perceived within a context or horizon. Thus, for example, the idea that quality circle groups can increase employee commitment, is one element in a complex of meanings about the organizational world that has to be understood in the context of a range of

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individual experiences and meanings. The horizon would include a person's interpretation of his experiences (both formal and informal); knowledge of the manufacturing process; ideas and attitudes expressed by others; problems faced at work, and his own reflection on all of these. His horizon thus encompasses both internal and external aspects and becomes, for any object of consciousness, a "set of possibilities for more precisely determining the object" (Rogers, 1983: 25). For any object then, the horizon functions as a fluid but encapsulating "boundary of meaning" that any act of consciousness can provide to the individual. Thus, one can say that consciousness is a dialogue with the physical and social world. It has direction or intentionality. provides meaning through noetic correlations, and operates within a horizon or context of meaning.

Life-world

The life-world or Lebenswelt is the surrounding embrasive world that provides all the grounds of our conscious existence. It is the mundane world of everyday life as lived and experienced by commonsense men carrying on the *"cognitive and emotional traffic of daily life"* (Natanson, 1974: 35). The life-world is not a construction, but is given directly and immediately in human experience (Spurling, 1977). It is the ground or starting point for the phenomenologist. There is nothing prior to the life world. It is the world to which intentional consciousness is directed. The world in which were are always living and which we presume will always be there. Rogers (1983) identified three essential features of the life-world:

(a)   that it is taken-for-granted emphasising a continuity and coherence to a range of fundamental and universal features of daily life, e.g. greeting, walking, waiting;

(b)   that it is social, bounded by history, culture and language;

(c)   that it constitutes the "paramount reality" necessary for all human experience, communication and activity.

The "life world shapes all that is human" said Rogers (1983: 50). It shapes and structures the biographical course of an individual's lived experiences.

Intersubjectivity

Phenomenologists rely on the experiences of individuals to understand the world of behaviour. However, it may be thought that such experiences are essentially private, with the knowledge of one person being unshareable with another. The problem of inter-subjectivity can be posed as follows. How can two or more actors share common experiences of the natural and social world? How can they communicate about them? (Heritage, 1984: 54).

Schutz's answer was to say that while human beings cannot have identical experiences of anything, they assume that their experiences are similar and they act as if they were. The world of everyday experience is an inter-subjective one in which we know and come to understand the lived experiences of others. This general thesis of reciprocal perspectives contains two idealizations. First, there is the inter-changeability of standpoints (change places with an individual and his "here" becomes mine). Second, congruency of system relevances. This is, the assumption that we interpret common objects and their features in an identical manner.

Inter-subjectivity is an achievement based on these two idealizations of a shared apprehension of an external world. It stresses the inherent socialness of consciousness and a shared common experience of the world. As Strasser (1963: 84) concluded, "... *man's essence is an orientation to others ... he cannot exist as a conscious being without others"*. It is through dialogue that man compares his experiences with that of his fellow man and out of which the different perspectives on identical experiences are revealed. In phenomenology, the term subjectivity is not only used in an individualised sense but also in a transcendental sense. In this second sense, it refers to the common possession by humanity, of consciousness and hence a common experiential structure.

Consciousness is held to transcend the individual and is not seen as an exclusive possession. Husserl referred to "transcendental subjectivism" while Schutz (1966) wrote about the "internal interconnectedness" of our lives. In this formulation, the individual is held to draw his "share of experiential structure" from the transcendental core. Other individuals do the same. Thus, it is possible, as Schutz (1972) explains, for more than one stream or tributary of consciousness to be running at any one time. Without such a commonalty of structure, the sharing of experience would not be possible.

Schutz also argued that, *"No two experiences duplicate each other precisely ... though lived individually, human acts do exhibit analogous structure ..."*. Husserl felt that experience, even in the first person, was not private but had definite generic characteristics. Thus, it was open-ness rather than privateness which characterised phenomenological subjectivity and this implied the possibility of mutual human influence. Consciousness or experience becomes shareable through socialization effects (Lauer and Handel, 1977), the influence of *"significant others"* (Berger and Luckmann, 1967), and the effects of background similarities in generating common perceptions and motivations among people.

As a social world, the inter-subjective world is a set of constructs and typifications. Groups, organizations, associations and institutions all have their "anatomy of rules and relationships which the actor must recognize and accept if he is to gain access" (Natansen, 1974: 61). For Schutz, the process for understanding the conduct of others can be understood as a process of typifications whereby the actor applies interpretive constructs akin to "ideal types" to apprehend the meanings of what people do (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

It is through the use of these constructs, derived from the experience of everyday life and stocks of knowledge (commonsense understanding), that we classify and organize everyday reality. The knowledge of our everyday life is inter-subjectively ordered. It implies culture and history which are progressively acquired throughout our own unique biographical situation and constitute the private world of interpretations.

Natural attitude

An essential aspect of an individual's lifeworld is the *natural attitude*. In the natural attitude, man suspends doubt about the existence of the outer world and its objects. It is the *"commonsense, everyday living in which I accept the world and the objects in it as unproblematic, taken-for-granted and given, independent of consciousness"* (Spurling, 1977:8). Schutz and Luckmann (1973: 5) succinctly captured the total essence of this pre-reflective acceptance which is intrinsic in the natural world:

> *"(a) the corporeal existence of other men; (b) that these bodies are endowed with consciousness essentially similar to their own; (c) that the things in the outer world included in my environs, and that of my fellow man, are the same for us and have fundamentally the same meaning; (d) that I can enter into interrelationships and reciprocal actions with my fellow men; (e) that I can make myself understood to them; (f) that a stratified social and cultural world is historically pre-given as a frame of reference for me and my fellow men, indeed, in a manner as taken for granted as the 'natural world'; (g) that therefore the situation in which I find myself at the moment is only, to a small extent, purely created by me."*

The importance of the natural attitude can be immediately seen. It underscores the notion of taken-for-grantedness, the existence of conscious others, and the idea of a similarity between my experience and that of others in relation to the same objects in the outer world (Natansen, 1974). The natural attitude is not only social. It governs and directs our engagement in daily life and its pragmatic considerations.

Stocks of knowledge

The social world is infused with subjective meaning and intention. The daily interaction with the life world is largely dependent upon a process of typification which classifies and structures our own everyday reality and

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which categorizes the actions of others. This means that we possess stocks of typifications which enable us to "see the world as familiar", ordinary mundane and typical (Brewer, 1984). The individual's lifeworld has a dialectic character. Part of each is constructed by each of us on the basis of our personal biography. Another part is given to us in the form of a public commonsense knowledge. These stocks of knowledge (or commonsense understandings) typify our daily experience. Luckmann (1983) described these forms of knowledge as elementary and tacit; routine (which includes basic skills, practical and recipe like knowledge); and explicit.

These varied stocks of knowledge allow the individual to cope with a range of general and specific daily situations. Over time, much routine knowledge and many skills come to be habitually applied and become effective responses to recurring situations that were once considered problematic. In sum, each individual has knowledge which maps out the understanding of everyday events into meaningful experience. The world exists as a typified world.

Experience

Human beings expect that their language will reveal the nature of human existence and action. Language conveys the notion of experience as a unitary stream. Luckmann (1983: 62) defined experience as *"those events in the stream of consciousness which stand out as topics to which the self attends and which are memorable"*. All experience, by definition, contributes to our knowledge creation. It is the "reflective glance" of consciousness backwards which makes aspects of the stream discrete and well-defined (Brewer, 1984: 743). The punctuated stream of conscious experience contributes to meaning and understanding.

The natural world possesses no intrinsic meaning structure. In contrast, the *"social world is a world constituted by meaning"* (Filmer et al, 1972: 17). The everyday world is experienced and interpreted by its members as an organized universe of meaning which takes the form of a series of

typifications of all the objects which constitute our physical and social world. A process of first order and second order constructions creates both meaning and a social world.

PHENOMENOLOGY AND THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

Phenomenology aids the investigation of human experience and its objects. It contains a body of key concepts which define the structure and the features of the inner world of conscious experience. The unbroken stream of consciousness contacts the external world. Meaning and understanding arise out of the active and intentional focus on objects. An individual's lifeworld constitutes the ground for human existence and is made comprehensive through the natural attitude and the process of typification.

The social world achieves its meaning and relevance through intersubjective understanding and the sharing of common experiences. A Schutzian actor inhabits a world of multiple realities, diverse "object worlds" with various modes of attending to them. This world has to do with commonsense, language and pragmatic action. Like all theoretical structures, phenomenology is open to critical appraisal on many counts. Critiques of phenomenology have been provided by Armstrong (1981), Best (1973, 1975), Bogart (1977), Gorman (1975) and Hall (1977).

Best (1973) questioned whether a research programme restricted to methodological individualism was appropriate to explain social phenomena. Whether the search for objective accounts of social phenomena by the suspension of all assumptions and hypotheses of "how things are" did not in fact lead to a positivist if not behaviourist account. He raised issues about the nature of objective and subjective reality, and man's dialectic relationship to social reality without coming to grips with the problems involved. Finally, Best claimed that by restricting the explanation of human action to the subjective meanings of actors, phenomenological sociology confused the problems of the relationship between reasons and actions, and what constituted a causally adequate explanation.

Gorman (1975), following a philosophical and methodological critique of Husserl and Schutz, concluded that there was a lack of objective criteria in the empirical world peopled by phenomenologically-defined subjects; that second-order constructs were used to serve as scientific explanations of the social behaviour being observed (with the observer attributing motives to the actors on the basis of impersonal empirical data); and the tendency of ethnomethodologists working within the phenomenological tradition, to address issues which were "less than profound" and which focused on mundane social behaviour patterns.

Phenomenology, which attempts to study human experience is both a philosophy and an approach. A constant feature of it as a method is the constant pushing to the surface of a person's assumptions about the nature of the phenomenon under study. A phenomenological approach is therefore an inductive, descriptive method (Hultgren, 1982). Van Manen (1979: 9-10) wrote that:

> *"The challenge for phenomenology is to make available, through a reflective use of method and description, "opportunities for seeing" through the surface structure of common educational phenomena and experiences ... It requires a repeated 'back to the things themselves' from simpler experiences to the pure phenomena".*

To explain how the phenomenological method is applied, two further concepts need to be introduced. These are *epoch* as it applies to the researcher and to the subjects' experiences, and *eidetic reduction.*

Epoche

In the epoche, the researcher's "essential attitude" is suspended so that he can apprehend the individual's life world. He temporarily suspends (brackets out) all existing personal beliefs, pre-conceptions, assumptions, or hunches formed from literature reviews in order to analyse the individual's experience in its context of consciousness. Stevenson (1979: 60) called this, "an open

mind to all possibilities" so that a pure and unchallenged vision of what objects "essentially are" is maintained. Epoche is the essential first step to opening up the meanings of things and to recognize and examine the mental acts by which objects are perceived in consciousness, and how they are experienced.

The purpose of bracketing the conscious experience is to keep out the researcher's external suppositions which might influence the identification and description of the themes ("invariants") of the individual's perceptions. The subsequent analysis of noema and noesis provides the noetic correlates of the emergent themes in which the objective statements are paired with their subjective reflections. Ihde (1977) conceptualised this descriptive analysis as beginning with <u>what</u> happens, and then moving on to reflect on <u>how</u> it happens in the consciousness.

One major misinterpretation frequently made by commentators is that the principle of epoche precludes hypotheses in all circumstances. Merleau-Ponty (1946) explained that epoche does not involve the suppression of the naturalistic attitude, but only its temporary suspension. Thus there is no objection to a researcher perceiving a phenomenon or problem and having a guess or developing a hunch as to its explanation. Nor is there any objection to him carrying out a detailed literature review and developing hypotheses or model to explain it.

The key difference is that the guess, hunch or hypothesis must not assume, presume or pre-determine data collection. The phenomenologist, having developed a possible explanation suspends it (puts it to one side) before proceeding to the stage of data collection. Having completed the task, he de-suspends epoche, and considers his hypothesis in the light of his empirical findings. Thus, while it is possible to have a phenomenological study without a hypothesis, a hypothesis is permissible in phenomenology.

Eidetic reduction

Eidetic reduction refers to the process of abstracting the essences from consciousness or experience. "Eidos" means an idea or a form (essence) which Husserl designated as a universal feature. It is the act which leads

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from the concrete expression of a particular phenomenon to the universal "pure" essence of it. The phenomenologist delves beneath or beyond what a positivist would investigate. Phenomenologically, essence refers to the overtness and a bringing to light, so that the basic irreducible element of experience is revealed.

The process of eidetic reduction goes beyond, behind or underneath the conventional patterns and structures of thought and action in order to locate their common grounds. The fundamental objective is always to be true to the data and avoid the researcher imposing his own views on either the respondent or the data. Traced to its Latin root, *reducere*, means to lead back. In the process of eidetic reduction, the researcher aims to trace phenomena back to how they show themselves in the consciousness of the subject. This process is achieved by phenomenologically looking for cues in the spoken and recorded language of the subject. Eidetic reduction:

> *"... is a matter of looking, looking again, then again, each time with greater precision, until we reach a clear evident grasp ... [of the subject's reality]."*

> Kohak (1978: 23)

To put eidetic reduction into effect in research, the researcher must not only recognise the social importance of language, but must also understand how language is used. This is because:

> *"When the speaker commits himself to linguistic and social categories, he provides the hearer, himself, and an observer or researcher with information about what he intends (or intended or did) ... a world view is built into the message."*

> Cicourel (1973: 62-3)

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To describe *"the essence of any noema or noesis stands as the central aim of this reduction"* (Phillipson, 1972: 129). It is accomplished through intuition and reflection and it furnishes us with the **why** of experience (Sanders, 1982). In order to extract the essence of the experience, the technique of "imaginative free variation" is used. The procedure consists of reflecting on the constituent parts of the experience - cognitive, affective and connotative - by systematically imagining each part as present or absent in the experience. By contextual comparison and elimination, one is able to reduce the description to those parts that are essential for the existence of the conscious experience (Ianigan, 1979). Take for example, the imaginative free variation of a table. Imagine it to be large or small, have one, three or four legs, be round, square or oblong, but not cone shaped or spherical. The presentation of an elevated horizontal surface then, is the essence of a table (Atkinson, 1972: 267-8). The objects of experience are considered to be the exemplars and they become the essence or *eidos* after the process of imaginative free variation.

Operationally therefore, to describe the total systemic structure of a lived experience, three operations have to be performed. First, the investigator has to bracket his own "essential attitude". Second, the epoche or the bracketing of conscious experience has to occur. Third, eidetic reduction is undertaken to abstract the essences of the experience. Sanders (1982) identified the four basic questions that the phenomenological researcher had to answer. These are:

1. How may the phenomenon under investigation be described?

2. What are the invariants or themes emergent in these descriptions?

3. What are the subjective reflections of these themes?

4. What are the essences present in those themes and subjective reflections?

PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS

How is such an approach to be put into practice? Chamberlain (1974: 126) asserted that *"there is no orthodox procedure which can be held up as the authoritative phenomenological method"*. The choice of method will vary depending on the particular phenomenon being studied. It was Mills (1959: 224) who exhorted sociologists to be their own methodologists and theorists. Georgiou (1973) identified some of the characteristics of phenomenological research methods:

"(a)   there is a fidelity to the phenomena lived

(b)   the method respects the primacy of the lifeworld

(c)   through describing the phenomena as it is lived, phenomenology attempts to determine in a rigorous manner the structure of meanings inherent in the description of the phenomena

(d)   the expression of the lived experience is given from the individual's point-of-view and includes his context

(e)   the search for meaning emerges from the data of the subject's lived experience."

Different research designs and methods exist which conform, in varying degrees, to these principles. One would include here as examples, the life history method, critical incident reporting, repertory grid and unstructured interviewing techniques. Similarities can be ascertained in the various phenomenological methods that have been used (Omery, 1983; Oiler, 1982; Sanders, 1982; Lynch-Sauer, 1985; Van Manen, 1978; Reinharz et al., 1983). All the methods begin by examining the individual products of human conscious experience (phenomena). This is followed by a thorough analysis of how and why these meanings develop in the process of consciousness and

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experience.   Method, in the phenomenological sense can only be approached in an indirect way, and certainly no single methodology exists (Hultgren, 1982: 54).

However, phenomenologically-based research methods do conform to certain standards. Phenomenology (Moray and Luthans, 1984) involves a primary commitment to the informant's view of reality, his categories and his meanings. This kind of data is symbolic, contextually embedded, reflexive and subscribes to the meaningful interpretation and action. Research material is generated "in vivo", close to its point of origin. Research methods which reflect such standards can be deemed to be within the phenomenological stable.

Criteria for "good" phenomenological research

It was mentioned earlier that phenomenological approaches had received criticism for being subjective, insupportable and invalid.   Questions have been raised about the reliability (internal validity) and generalizability (external validity).   First it should be noted that phenomenology does not have the same objectives as positivistic approaches. The positivistic criteria of validity is irrelevant to the results of a phenomenologically grounded study. Winch (1964: 315) argued that if one went back to Husserl and Heidegger, and the philosophical foundations of contemporary phenomenology, one found that if there was anything that corresponded to validity in the phenomenological sense, then it was utterly subjective (Lauer, 1965).   Writers who took this position included Gibbs (1972) and Gidlow (1972).   They conclude that phenomenological methods are not only alternatives, but are actually discontinuous with positivistic science.

Defining validity as wholly subjective becomes part of rejecting the notion that our knowledge of reality can ever be objectively certain.   Such validity is not the point at which conventions lead us to accept the data as demonstrated, it is in fact the point at which we become willing to act on the basis of the knowledge.   It is the point of closure for action.   This presents

validity as a subjective confidence level, " ... *of being sufficiently conversant with an object of our experience for the actual purpose at hand"* (Schutz, 1970: 61) and, *"when further research is deemed unnecessary"* (p. 142).

Positivist enquiry stops at complete understanding, or, in practice, at what the discipline's conventions of significance define as adequately complete understanding. On this basis, the phenomenological convention should be that enquiry stops when the researcher's or actor's confidence rises to the point where he feels willing to act. The population of respondents is determined by whatever is necessary for researchers to build up a confident picture of the actor's decision-making strategy. Hence, the notion of a statistically-valid sample is meaningless in a phenomenological context.

The phenomenological method does not depend on the largeness of a population for truth. Largeness of population is a feature of positivist research designs. It is made operationally manageable by means of random sampling. This is a process of ensuring that every member of a population from which a number of individuals are selected for study, has an equal chance of being chosen. The selected individuals are held to represent the characteristics of their fellows and are in fact referred to as a "representative sample". Without this, claim the positivists, it is not possible to generalize the research findings to the population as a whole.

Why does the phenomenological approach not require either largeness of numbers or sampling of any kind? It is argued that large populations and samples yield huge amounts of data which may not be tremendously useful. Bannister and Fransella state that:

> *"While it (personal construct or a phenomenologically-based method) does not argue against the collection of information, neither does it measure truth by the size of the collection. Indeed, it leads one to regard a large accumulation of facts as an open invitation for some far-reaching re-construction which will reduce them to a mass of trivialities."*

> Bannister and Fransella (1980: 10)

Sanders argued that:

> *"The first crucial rule for the phenomenological researchers is: more subjects do not yield more information. Quantity should not be confused with quality. The phenomenologist must learn to engage in in-depth probing of a limited number of individuals ... approximately three to six."*

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Sanders (1982: 356)

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Thus one aspect of the phenomenological research design is the focus upon a small number of subjects. How are these to be chosen and what are the implications of this for the generalizability of the study's conclusions? Phenomenologists chose individuals who *have the characteristics of the phenomena under investigation.*

Positivist conclusions tend to impress if they are logical. The phenomenolist would say that positivist generalizations or universal conclusions serve the function of predicting behaviour. However, since human beings are not unconscious objects like metals or chairs, and since they individually or in social contexts alter meanings as they understand their environments more deeply (or as environmental objects change), their behaviour is not predictable in the way that the behaviour of natural objects is predictable. Thus, the only feasible genralization in the phenomenological view of reality is problematic generalization and not universal generalization (Kohak, 1978: 100). Problematic generalization means that in a world of changing meanings and unique individualised definitions of reality, any generalization must necessarily be cautious and qualified with "ifs". Generalization has to be restricted to the subjects in the situation and not generalized outside of them.

Phenomenology therefore is a two-stage method of penetrating the meaning-structure, and then of re-emerging with something comprehensible to say. Subjective validity, in terms of willingness to act, could apply to the first. The real problem is that the researcher's audience wants an objective

test of validity of the study as a whole. The test they want (and cannot have because of the structure) is the positivist test of the researcher's subjective confidence. The only test that applies is the reader's confidence in what he has gained from his personal phenomenological research down the trail that the researcher created for him. We can never speak objectively of the novelist's ability to capture a situation. All we can do is to express our personal response to what he has written.

We can look for something solid and call the researcher's bluff, but asking him to express his confidence in a practical rather than a conceptual way. Perhaps see how well he succeeds as a management guru. When we do this we merely put ourselves in the researcher's place. How do we know how well Huczynski is getting on as a management guru? In the end, we have to rely on our own, personal, commonsense interpretation of what we see going on, and this is just another definition of subjective confidence.

Some researchers recommend the checking of results with the interviewees who produced the original data. However, this itself is open to the same infinite regression (Filmer et al., 1972:10). How are we to know that the manager is not simply agreeing with us to please us, or to avoid any future time-wasting? Ultimately therefore, one cannot have an "objective" measure of validity in the conclusion of a phenomenological approach, as a positivist would understand it.

Readers must apply their own subjective measures to this research. Amongst these might be whether it possesses sufficient complexity (in terms of the number of constructs presented); whether the data has been gathered by methods which allow meanings to emerge; and whether each respondent investigated has the characteristics of the target group. Readers must also be prepared to be surprised, and can treat this surprise as evidence. When they find themselves in another, unfamiliar meaning system, they know that they have travelled.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Research design refers to a strategy or overall approach used by the researcher in tackling a research question or problem. The subjects to be studied work in organizations and are capable of assessing and describing their decision-making and evaluation processes with respect to management ideas. In other words, they embody within themselves, the pre-experience and post-experience measurement characteristic of an experimental design. To quote one researcher:

> " ... *results show that many features of valid judgements, like the use of objective criteria and control group ... are ... present in the judgement processes underlying evaluative opinions. This suggests that a certain amount of validity can be attached to opinion-based follow-up studies".*

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Burgoyne (1974: 543)

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This research used a three-step approach:

1. Self-administered questionnaires to business school faculty.

2. Self-administered questionnaires to experienced managers attending MBA programmes.

3. In-depth interviews with nine experienced managers.

The purpose of the surveys was to obtain an overview of which management ideas business school faculty preferred to teach and why, and which ideas managers placed value upon and why. The aim of the in-depth interviews was to delve into the decision-making and evaluation processes of the

individuals in greater depth, so as to uncover their meaning-structures. Both the survey and the interview accorded to the phenomenological principles outlined earlier.

A research method is a technique for collecting information or data. Survey questionnaires of the positivist variety have been extensively used (Likert, 1961) and have received widespread acceptance and popularity. Where straightforward accounting type information is sought (numbers of people, ages of cars), they are valuable. However, the phenomenologist would claim that when these are used to study human processes, such as management style (Likert, 1967), or perceptions of organizational climate (Stern, 1970: Litwin and Stringer, 1968), they are inappropriate for a number of reasons.

First, such a questionnaire records more than might have occurred to the respondents in their actual experiences. It thus imposes the researchers's view of the world which the respondent may not have. Second, no researcher can claim to know all of the items likely to be significant to a respondent in their actual experience. A questionnaire is thus restrictive, being less than that which is contained in a subject's experiential frame of reference. Third, a phenomenologist would doubt whether the data-related mental and emotional processes of any respondent could be adequately reflected in the scales and items of even the most thoroughly prepared questionnaire. These "black-box" processes cannot be separated from human behaviour. They provide the data on how experience/consciousness and its intentional objects show themselves.

The other research methods in the positivist stable all suffer from this fundamental deficiency. The researcher either imposes his own assumptions upon the subject (by fragmenting the 'image' of the subject's experience by the data collection instrument he uses), or by making interpretations on behalf of the subject when, for example, he decides what is to be correlated with what.

One might briefly mention the method of observation used by behaviourists which relies upon the researcher attaching meanings to phenomena which he himself may not have experienced. An action which was initially defined as conscious and purposeful, once it had been "genetically delved" by the

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phenomenologist to get at the roots of the behaviour in experience/ consciousness, may be discovered to have been absent mindedness. Observation techniques may also result in self-fulfilling prophecies with the researchers discovering what they set out to discover (Burgoyne and Hodgson, 1982). Turning finally to the widely-used case study approach, one can see that case accounts represent historical reflections or recalls of experience. Case studies contain the case writer's account of events. In addition, they often contain records of opinions rather than actual subject's experience.

The most widely used research methods have a positivist orientation and are therefore deficient in the eyes of phenomenologists. Which methods then are suitable? The detailed arguments for the application of "sensitive" research methods in organizational research has been made by many writers (Morgan and Smirich, 1980; Evered and Louis, 1981; Luthans and Davies, 1982; Smith, 1983; and Morey and Luthans, 1984). They argue for the interpretive approach which generates data that is grounded in the subject's own understanding of his context and is premised on the belief that people are *"active participants in the making of experience"* (Smirch, 1983: 161). Sanders (1982) identified three phenomenologically-based methods of investigation:

(a)   in-depth, structured oral history interviews with subjects which are tape recorded and then transcribed;

(b)   a documentary study in which the writings of subjects are reviewed to derive meanings (this technique is often used to supplement the first);

(c)   participant - observation techniques which are followed by interviews which explore particular behaviours in greater depth.

Having obtained a description of the subject's psychological experience using one or more of these methods, what does one do then? Burgoyne and Hodgson (1982) identified the following steps:

(a)   Break down the experience into its natural meaning units that are interpreted as part of the whole description.

(b)   Classify the natural meaning units so that the sense of the whole (which they imply) is discovered.

(c)   Provide a comprehensive description of the structure which serves as the basis for the dialogue with the subject to which the researcher returns.

Having reviewed the methods which conform to phenomenological principles, it was decided to adopt two of these. These were an adapted form of self-completion questionnaire and protocol content analysis.

Questionnaire

This research method might be described as a phenomenological self-administered questionnaire. While it may sound as a contradiction in terms, the two instruments used did fulfil the requirements discussed earlier. Traditional, positivist questionnaires guide respondents to focus on issues that the researcher considers important. They restrict the responses that can be made by offering a limited number of choices which have to be ticked in a schema devised by the researcher. In contrast, the phenomonological questionnaire shown in Appendix B contains blank spaces. Respondents were invited to respond in any way in which they felt appropriate. In line with the principles of phenomenology, the questionnaire included neither a list of management ideas to be ticked, nor a list of reasons to be identified. This part of the study involved the straightforward counting of which management ideas academics preferred to teach (and why) and which ideas

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managers found valuable (and why). This written data was supplemented by more in-depth protocol analysis study. Two questionnaires were administered, one to business school academics and a second to managers on part-time MBA programmes.

The first questionnaire was distributed amongst business school faculty. Since it was felt that the response might be inhibited if there was any suspicion that the researcher was seeking to compare student and lecturer responses within the same institution, business school teachers received questionnaires whose students were not involved in the survey. Lecturers were asked three questions. Which management ideas did they prefer to teach? How they typically teach these ideas? What was the reason for their preference?

The second questionnaire was distributed amongst practising managers who possessed management experience, and who had participated in various forms of management development, either inside or outside of their organization. Additionally, they had to be "aware" of developments taking place in management in British industry. The most straightforward way of selecting such a group was to use students attending part-time MBA programmes in the United Kingdom. The majority of participants are in their thirties and forties, have had at least seven or eight years of management experience, are career mobile and generally have taken steps to develop themselves in their job. In practical terms, these people were easily contactable through the directors of such programmes at British university and polytechnic business schools. A short questionnaire was included which asked only three questions:

1.   Which management ideas did they found valuable?

2.   Which specific aspect of the idea did they find valuable?

3.   Why do they value that idea?

These these questions were essentially prompts. The word "valuable" was purposely not defined.

Protocol analysis

Protocol content analysis (or protocol analysis for short) uses protocols as sources of data. Protocols are verbatim transcripts of respondents; articulations about the phenomena under investigation. Data is obtained by having the respondent "think aloud" in response to a series of prompts. The responses are tape recorded, transcribed and analysed. The method can be regarded as a type of unstructured interview. A distinguishing features is that while traditional interviews may seek opinions of respondents, this one focuses on the subjects actual experiences.

The routes to meaning are explored when participants combine experience, extensive definition and verbal exchange. Mintzberg (1975) estimated that about 75% of the average manager's activity was verbal, so he must possess a verbal facility in his role. A key feature of the protocols is that they contain the respondents' own assessments of what the relevant factors are. The researcher, while he may have his own hypotheses, does not impose these upon the speaker. A limited number of broadly focused prompts are used to stimulate the thought and verbal processes. The methodological perspective has to be consistent with the problem definition. Each of the basic steps involved in protocol analysis will be summarized.

1. The completed questionnaire of each responding manager and management student or business school lecturer is produced.

2. Taking each answer on the questionnaire in turn, allow the subject a minute or two to recall the thinking behind his written response.

3. Using a tape-recorder, obtain a verbatim record of the subject's articulations.

4. Transcribe the recording by having it typed up but not edited in any way. Such typing should be on the left hand side of the page only, leaving the right hand side available for comments.

5. Study the transcript, categorize the articulations into their units and attach the researcher's interpretations.

6. State the interpretations, showing the noema and noesis in the blank, right hand side column beside the articulations (protocols) being interpreted.

7. Include interpretations of how the subject gives his accounts of experience. This helps the acceptability of such accounts. For example, assertion without illustration; illustration of factual material experience; his explanations of the cause of his behaviour since it is he and not the researcher who engages in correlations; whether it is in single words, phrases or sentences. All of this can convey a world of environmental images.

8. Since several subjects' articulations are recorded verbatim, it is desirable to group similar noematic elements (objects-in-consciousness) in the same table. Each subject's account makes up one case. Similar noetic are grouped together in a separate table.

9. Suspend epoche and discuss the noematic elements, incorporating references to related literature, other research findings, the researcher's own ideas as well as pre-study assumptions. Bring all of these to bear upon the noemic and noetic elements.

The actual mechanics of analysis may be of interest to researchers seeking to emulate this approach. The exhaustive interpretative process involved getting the *"phenomenon to reveal itself more completely than it did in ordinary meaning"* (Squires, 1978: 110). Because the material was orally recorded, the first step of the process was greatly assisted by re-listening to the tape and noticing the speaker's self-imposed nuances to his own comments. This provided an additional dimension which facilitated the initial identification of themes (invariants) from the written transcripts. The subsequent analysis proceeded as indicated below:

Step 1:

Read all the transcript protocols in order to acquire a feel for them.

Step 2:

For each protocol, extract the significant statements or phrases which are directly relevant to the phenomenon being studied i.e. the various dimensions of valuation.

Step 3:

Attempt to formulate the meaning of each significant statement (creative insight). Valle and King (1978: 53) commented that *"this is a precarious leap because, while moving beyond the protocol statements, the meanings he arrives at and formulates should never sever all connections with the original protocols ... [the formulations must] ... discover and illuminate those meanings hidden in the various contexts and horizons."*

Step 4:

Repeat this for each protocol and organize and aggregate formulated meanings into "clusters of themes " (invariants)   for each dimension of the valuation.   As noted in the previous step, the difficulty is here is even greater as one is attempting to articulate themes common in all participants' protocols for each dimension.   At this point,

discrepancies may be noted among the clusters. The identified clusters of themes are referred back to the original protocols to validate them. One has to accept that what may be *"logically inexplicable, may be existentially real and valid"* (Valle and King, 1978) and hence must be incorporated.

Step 5:

The results of the previous steps are integrated into an "exhaustive description" of the valuation experience.

Step 6:

This description of the valuation process is formulated into a "statement of identification" of the fundamental structure of these experiences. This step is accomplished through a reflection on the themes contained in the fundamental experience and constitutes the final reduction of the data into its components - its essences.

This research is necessarily limited in scope and implications, by virtue of the content and method chosen. It is basically delimited to the valuations of a group of managers.

CONCLUSION

From a phenomenological perspective there can be no single and correct "reading" of the external world, nor any pre-conceived and objective base to the understanding of human knowledge. Social reality is a transient, complex and constantly self-defining process, encompassing space, time, personal relations, nature emotions and values.

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Phenomenological research methods are prone to certain faults. They require the researcher to enter his subject's meaning-structure and re-emerge with something that can be shared with an audience, otherwise there are no results. This problem should not be underestimated.

Although it has been argued that the positivist criterion of validity is irrelevant to the results of a phenomenological enquiry, there must be some other criterion if incipient relativism is to be controlled. While one might be unable to research into the process of creating a meaning-structure with a method that actually relies on it being hypothesised before, nevertheless, some control must be exercised over what the researcher subsequently asserts is the meaning structure. Thus the phenomenological position on validity needs to be defined.

What credence can be given to research results? The loss of the underpinning universal rationality of science makes it impossible to consider the problems of validity and reliability in phenomenology abstractly, that is, independently of the actual research procedures.

All research methods which rely on direct subject data collection (as opposed to observation or document analysis) can be subject to respondent censorship and lying. This is true irrespective of the research philosophy adopted. It is impossible to detect the extent of such practices. One can therefore divide topics of research into potentially controversial ones (where subjects may be expected to hide their true answers) and non-controversial ones (where one would expect them to be open and tell the truth).

Given the limited ability of positivistic methods to detect subject lying on controversial issues, phenomenological ones do not need to do significantly better, to match that of their counterparts. Closed, survey-type questions are generally easier to falsify and to "give the researcher the answer he wants". However, one might argue that the protocol analysis technique of prompts rather than questions, "thinking aloud" , audiotaping and detailed analysis of responses is more, rather than less, likely to elicit a subject's true experience. The subject is, as it were, "given enough rope to hang himself". The themes raised, the words used, the imagery employed, all provide the researcher with tell-tail clues to the way the respondent experiences the phenomenon.

Additionally, the respondents' transcripts and the researcher's interpretations alongside are available to the outside observer. He or she can independently inspect these and check that the researcher's indexed interpretations are true to the subjects' data.

The purpose of non-positivistic research methods such as those based on phenomenological ideas is to elicit unfamiliar meaning-structures rather than to extend familiar ones. The phenomenologist has to enter into the unfamiliar meaning structure of the respondent, and then return to his audience, bringing with him his gained understanding. A major problem with interpretive research methods is the lack of common ground between the researcher and his audience. Unable to share the common ground of the positivist, the phenomenologist's research objective is to encourage the sceptical listener to look in a new way into an unfamiliar rationality which may often include unprecedented pressures and objectives. He seeks to educate the unconvinced. The nature of the audience's understanding is also different. It involves a novel rationality, and not just a further consequence of a familiar rationality. Frequently, that understanding comes suddenly, as a holistic experience, an "Aha!", a shock of recognition. The meaning lies in the totality of the inter-relationships, and not in their elements or constructs.

CHAPTER 9

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction
Business school academics' survey
Managers' survey
Analysis of managers' protocols
Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

It is possible to use a suitably adapted survey approach to complement the protocol analysis instruments. Such methods can study greater numbers of respondents and typically answer the question "what". By necessity, protocol analysis focuses on small numbers and addresses the question of "why"? In the case of this research there was the requirement to check that the hypothesised variables identified through the literature review were in fact the relevant ones. Hence, a phenomenological-based questionnaire was used alongside the phenomenological protocol-analysis interview. Therefore, the data to be presented in this chapter consists of three main types. First, the findings of the self-administered questionnaire survey which was conducted amongst business school academics. Second, the findings of the self-administered questionnaire survey conducted amongst practising managers attending graduating management programmes. Third, the analysis of eight protocols from practising managers who were interviewed by the researcher.

The main focus of the data collection was upon managers rather than business school academics. Both the self-administered questionnaires distributed to managers and the interviews conducted with managers were based upon phenomenological principles. In line with this perspective, neither the research design (survey) nor the instrument used (the questionnaire) made any attempt to meet the traditional positivist criteria (representative random sampling, correlation potential, satisfactory response rate, etc). Nevertheless, 115 completed questionnaires were returned by managers and, while no attempt is made to identify what are the currently popular management ideas in any statistical sense, the questionnaires do provide data which helps us to understand what makes a management idea popular.

The three sources of data revealed similarities in term of content (what was said) and language (how it was expressed). While it would be inappropriate to claim any attempt at triangulation, the recurrence of the points made, and

the themes that emerged from the different respondents, does lead one to believe that one is on the trail of the elements and processes that make certain management ideas achieve popularity.

BUSINESS SCHOOL ACADEMICS' SURVEY

The thesis argued that an important element in the the creation of a popular management idea was its promotion, either by business school academics who taught and researched it, or by private companies which marketed the associated idea-based techniques. The first aspect provided the opportunity to conduct a small investigation. It was recognized that this sub-topic had the potential to be developed into a full scale research project at a later date.

Lacking any substantive literature to draw upon, the researcher hypothesised that business school academics would prefer, and hence would promote by teaching and researching, those management ideas which:

1.   Possessed the potential for researching and for subsequent publication.

2.   Generated interest amongst other academics, management students and managers.

3.   Possessed ease of teachability.

4.   Offered the potential for consultancy.

5.   Assisted in legitimating management's role.

6.   Possessed, in the academic's view, some valuable "truth" which should be communicated.

A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to academics in polytechnic and university business schools. The questionnaire (Appendix B) followed the phenomenological principles outlined in the previous chapter. The idea of a phenomenological self-administered questionnaire may appear to be a contradiction in terms. An inspection of the instrument itself and its associated completion instructions reveals that it fits with phenomenological principles. The traditional positivist questionnaire guides respondents to certain topics and not to others; it seeks information in a pre-determined, sequenced way that fits in with the researcher's view of the subject; and it structures respondents' answers so that they fit into pre-defined categories. In contrast, the questionnaire used in this research designated a bounded area of research interest (valuable management ideas) and having done so, provided numerous square inches of blank space for respondents to answer in ways that they considered most appropriate.

This lack of structure inevitably contributed to the low response rate. Only 57 of the 204 academics who were sent the questionnaire replied. This represented a response rate of only 28 per cent. Since the objective was merely to collect some background information and raise questions (rather than answer them) this was not a problem. However, readers who are inclined to generalise from any set of data should treat these findings with the utmost caution. The small amount of data that was obtained did not support hypotheses 1, 4 or 5. It partly supported hypothesis 2 in that student interest (but not that of other academics) affected choice. It rather more strongly supported hypothesises 3 and 6.

The 57 academics who did respond came from different disciplines as indicated by the descriptions of the 191 management ideas which they identified as being ones they consciously chose to teach. Fifty-two per cent taught in the general management field; 25 per cent taught human behaviour; 13 per cent were from finance and accounting; 4 per cent came from operations management; and three per cent were from marketing and business policy.

The reasons for their 191 choices produced 335 comment codings. Perhaps the single most important finding was the existence of three predominant orientations amongst business school academics. This produced a simple triple orientation amongst academics who were judged to be either *student*, *teacher* or *subject* oriented. The results can be summarized as follows:

Respondents	57	
Management ideas named	191	
Reasons for choice given	335	

Reasons

Student oriented	147	(44%)
Subject oriented	119	(36%)
Teacher oriented	69	(20%)

Given the post-hoc nature of the coding, it is inevitable that there would be some overlaps.

(a)   **Student orientation**

Of the 335 reasons given for management idea choice, 44% related to a student focus. These reasons, given by academics for their choice of management idea, related primarily to the effect that the choice would have on the students concerned. Respondents referred explicitly to students or managers in their accounts. Forty-four per cent (44%) of comments fell into this category, making it the single largest one. These will now be examined in a little more detail. Post-hoc coding of academics answers produced eight distiguishable response categories relevant to a student focus. Three reasons accounted for just under three quarters of the comments expressed (See Table 9.1).

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Table 9.1: **Student-oriented reasons for management idea choice.**

Code	No.	%	Reasons for choice
G	46	13.8	Allows different perspectives to be brought to learners' attention. Challenges them to think through difficult theories, develops thinking skills, is counter intuitive.
F	33	9.8	Topic allows teaching formats which permits high learner involvement/ participation, lively and engaging for learners, puts pressure off tutors.
I	24	7.2	Topic perceived by students to be commonsense, realistic, relevant, acceptable, memorable. They intuitively "know it", "can relate to it" or it "rings bells" with them.
L	20	6.0	Perceived by learners as providing immediately applicable techniques.
Q	9	2.7	Innate student interest in the subject.
C	6	1.8	Feeling that learners are learning and actually enjoying.
P	5	1.5	Gives students intellectual satisfaction and confidence.
S	4	1.2	Students should grasp principles, not just techniques.
TOTAL	147	44.0	

<u>Students' response</u> (Code G: 13.8%; Code I: 7.2%)

In selecting which management ideas to teach, the responding faculty appeared to have predominantly two, contradictory, aims. One group of teachers sought to select and present material which consciously **challenged** students' and managers' taken-for-granted assumptions (Code G: 13.8%). For example, requiring them to work through difficult theories. The term "counter-intuitive" was frequently used to refer to looking at ideas and research which expressed a new or different point of view.

The underlying idea here was that thinking would only occur if such opposing perspectives were brought to the attention of managers to challenge their assumptions and preconceptions. Such new insights were seen by faculty as "coming as a relevation" to them, "causing them surprises" and "standing accepted practice on-its-head". Examples of management ideas which included held to produce such paradigm shifts in students and managers were McGregor's Theory X and Y; portfolio analysis; organizational buying behaviour theory; statistical process control; and time diaries. A similar notion, of challenging accepted ideas (labelled Revelation), was discovered in the interviews with managers.

The opposite orientation (Code I: 7.2%) was also evident. These faculty members selected their management ideas for exactly the opposite reason. That is, because the ideas presented would <u>not</u> challenge students' expectations. Instead, the ideas would be perceived as commonsense, realistic and acceptable. The managers who were taught them would, in the faculty's view, already "intuitively know" them, the ideas would "ring bells" with them and, as learners, they could "relate" to them. The respondents commented that these chosen ideas were "perceived as relevant by students", were "very acceptable to students", the "students found it easy to relate to these concepts", it fitted "students' own model" and the ideas seemed "realistic" and "highly acceptable" to them. Again, the interviews with managers revealed similar experiences. These were labelled Correspondence.

Teaching (Code F: 9.8%)

This explanation of management idea choice related to the possibility of using a learning format to convey an idea which permitted a high level of student involvement and participation which would lead to lively classroom discussion.   The idea was primarily chosen for presentation because of the teaching possibilities that it offered. While the comments related to the teaching techniques that could be used, the explanation by faculty members was made in terms of the benefits which were perceived to accrue to the students:

> "They became involved and passionate"
> "Very involving for the students who generally respond well"
> "Gets a very high degree of student involvement"
> "Student involvement gives them satisfaction"

Usability of ideas (Code L: 6.0%)

The third area related to the potential of the management idea being taught to be of value to students in their work. That is, the idea was practical, possessed a predictive value, offered structured techniques. Comments included:

> "Useful for people who demand action quickly"
> "Techniques are straightforward"
> "Can apply them to own experience"
> "Ideally should give opportunity to apply"
> "It also has some predictive utility"

(b)   Subject orientation

The subject orientation came second and, represented 36% of all the reasons, given. Two reasons stood out see (Table 9.2). The respondents mentioned evangelical zeal of the lecturer (Code H: 17.3%) and the fact that an idea could be easily and quickly understood by students (Code J: 3.6%).

Table 9.2:   Subject-oriented reasons for management idea choice.

Code	No.	%	Reasons for choice
H	58	17.3	Evangelical zeal of the lecturer regarding importance of subject within the discipline
J	12	3.6	Idea easily and quickly understood by
E	10	3.0	Teaching ideas "whose time had come" students
O	10	3.0	Brings home learning points, bridges gap, integrates ideas
R	9	2.7	Importance of the idea
K	9	2.7	Idea is comprehensive- adequate theory, not too abstract or over-simplified
M	6	1.8	Could be taught in a way that linked to other ideas
Y	3	0.9	Idea gives insight into ... (something else).
X	2	0.6	Allows important ideas to be introduced in a simple structured way
TOTAL	119	36.0	

(c)   **Teacher orientation**

The teacher orientation represented the third broad perspective amongst faculty.   A total of 69 responses identified one predominant reason.   See Table 9.3.

Confidence with subject (Code B: 9.2%)

At 9.2% this received the fourth highest rating across all three perspectives. Stated simply, faculty chose those management ideas which they could teach with confidence.   Such confidence could come from teaching material which was based on their own research and not culled from someone else's textbook; from them having collected relevant teaching materials over a period of time; or they were teaching from their own work experience.

Table 9.3:   Teacher-oriented reasons for management idea choice.

Code	No.	%	Reasons for choice
B	31	9.2	Personal confidence with the idea
D	15	4.5	Area of controversy which challenged teacher needing him/her to get to grips with it
A	13	3.9	Opportunity for personal showing-off
U	8	2.3	Lecturer's personal satisfaction, interest in management idea
V	1	0.3	Commercially lucrative
W	1	0.3	Offers scope for publication
TOTAL	69	20.0	

<u>Evangelical zeal of lecturer</u> (Code H: 17.3%)

This was the most often quoted explanation for choice in the teacher oriented section.   Faculty staff selected the management ideas which they personally felt were important and that students should know about. Several of the respondents concluded their remarks with an exclamation mark:

"Perhaps there's a lurking evangelical zeal here !"
"Evangelist's pleasure - managers need to know economics !"
"Important for students to understand."
"Significant for managers to understand their own and others
management development".
"Relevant for all managers and prospective managers".

To summarize, the top four reasons given by business school academics for choosing the management idea from within their discipline are shown in Table 9.4.   What then are the implications of these findings for the management guru? First, it should be noted that in Britain, business school faculty play a relatively unimportant role in promulgating management ideas. Surveys of management education and training conducted in Britain in the late 1980s indicated how few managers, at any level, were exposed to management training education.   The situation was so bad that it led to the launching of the Management Charter Initiative (MCI).

Having said that, it does no harm for the guru to have his or her idea promoted by the business school staff amongst those managers and supervisors who do happen to be there.   So what do they have to do?   At the design level, their idea should be perceived to be challenging to the potential "customer".   It must possess a "message" which the lecturer can promote with evangelical zeal.   The quality message of Juran, Deming and Crosby, or the time management message of Mackenzie and Lakin fit into this category well.   There has to be something that both the lecturer and the student can get excited about.

Table 9.4: Summary of the four main reasons guiding academics' choice of management ideas to teach.

Code	Orientation	Reason	No. of times mentioned	% of total
H	Subject	Evangelical zeal	58	17.3
G	Student	Provides a different perspective which challenges students' taken-for-granted assumptions	46	13.8
F	Student	Idea permits student involving teaching format	33	9.8
B	Teacher	Tutor confident with teaching the idea	31	9.2

At the operational level, the supporting teaching materials need to be sufficiently structured to allow the lecturer to present the idea to students with confidence. In addition, the materials pack needs to contain exercises and activities which actively involve the course participants. These are the initial conclusions based upon a very limited survey of business school academics.

This small scale survey does suggest an idea for an interesting and wider-ranging research into the choice motivations of business school faculty. Amongst the questions that such a study could seek to answer are: to what extent is the triple orientation valid? Are there different orientations

between the different subjects traditionally taught in business schools? Are there differences in explainable terms of lecturers' ages, sex and background? Are there differences between different business schools? We now turn to the main study of managers.

MANAGERS' SURVEY

A similar self-administered questionnaire was circulated amongst part-time MBA students who were also practising managers. As with the business school faculty, the questionnaire was minimally structured and requested the respondent to reply in a mini-essay form. Once again, the instrument sought not to impose the researcher's views on the respondents (see Appendix B). A pilot version of this questionnaire revealed that the wording was crucial. Early versions asked for management ideas which the respondents found *memorable, useful* or *interesting*. On reflection it was decided that such terms were leading, and the word *valuable* should be used instead. It was expected that different managers would judge an idea and attribute value to it in different ways.

A total of 220 questionnaires were distributed to students in university and polytechnic business schools, and 115 were returned. This represents a response rate of 52 per cent. The survey was intended to complement the main interview data collection instrument. No attempt was made to distinguish the characteristics of the respondents or the educational institutions that they attended.

Questionnaires distributed	220
Usable replies	115
Total number of management ideas named	375
Ideas per respondent	3.2

The 375 management ideas that were mentioned by the responding managers were grouped under five main categories. These are shown in the Table 9.5. The table shows, that the area that was found most value as a source of ideas was general management rather than the specialist management fields. The 55% of responses that fell into that field were equally divided between knowledge and skills. If one adds the 91 mentions for human relations ideas, then one can see that nearly four-fifths (79%) of ideas found most valuable by managers come from this field.

Table 9.5: Classification by discipline of management ideas mentioned by managers.

Category	No.	%
General management	207	55
- Knowledge	94	25
- Skills	113	30
Human relations	91	25
Finance/accounting	50	13
Operations management	15	4
Marketing/business policy	12	3
	375	100

This percentage is historically in line with the literature review figures. Every subject field has its influential guru. For example Philip Kotler (marketing), Michael Porter (business policy), Eli Goldratt (Just-in-Time), J. Edwards Deming (quality management). However, an aspiring management guru should focus upon the general management/human relations area because

statistically that is the where the chances of success are greatest. Considering this sub-field of management in greater detail, three ideas topped the list. They were:

		No.	% of total
1.	Ideas about employee motivation	31	8.7
2.	Quality management	15	4.0
3.	Time management	13	3.5

The most interesting aspect of these figures however, is how little agreement there was amongst managers as to which management ideas are the valuable ones. This is reflected in the wide range of different management ideas mentioned by respondents. Table 9.6 shows that the 375 individual mentions were represented by 178 different ideas.

It also shows that the highest scoring management idea, motivation, was mentioned by only 31 of the 115 respondents. Then came quality management (with 15 respondents mentioning it), followed by time management (with 13 respondents). The most interesting figure is shown on the top line of the table. Of the 178 management ideas mentioned, 110 of them were only mentioned once by a single respondent. The 1980s represented a high point in business writing. It is perhaps to be expected that a diverse range of management ideas should be cited. As far as the thesis is concerned, it is not the current ideas themselves that are important, but the criteria which underlie the valuation process. It is to this issue that attention is now turned.

A total of 375 management ideas were described by 115 managers. In each case, the idea was named, the particular aspect that was valued identified, and the reason for the value placed upon it explained. These replies were coded. Where explanations could not be coded using one of the pre-defined categories developed from the literature review, these were noted. As will be shown, the few unexpected comments were accommodated by slightly enlarging a classification or merging two of them. These will now be discussed and exemplified.

Table 9.6:   Frequency of mentions of management ideas

Mentioned by respondents	No. of ideas	Total mentions
1 (once only)	110	110
2	32	64
3	17	51
4	4	16
5	4	20
6	3	18
7	3	21
8	2	16
13	1	13
15	1	15
31	1	31
	178	375

How comprehensive were the coded categories?

Overall the categories which had been defined earlier stood up remarkably well to the data supplied by the respondents with little need to squeeze in comments where they did not easily fit. Nevertheless some categories had to be re-defined, although it was not found necessary to create any totally new ones. The modifications were as follows:

I.   <u>Applicability</u>

The question arose as to whether the dimensions of Pay-off guarantee and Quick fix (identified in the literature review in Chapter 2) were in fact different variables or just different facets of the same variable. An analysis of answers led to the conclusion that the dimension of *time* was important

here. Time of asking affected the response received in that some managers made an assessment of the applicability of the idea <u>before</u> using it, while others confirmed its value <u>after</u> they had used it. It was considered that categories of Pay-off and Quick-fix categories could be collapsed into a single category called Application, which contained within it three related notions. These were:

The perception by the manager that the idea was <u>capable of being applied</u> to work <u>in the future</u> (irrespective of whether such application was likely to produce benefits). This recognition can arise out of a co-incidence between the individual's or organizational needs on the one hand, and the idea content on the other. (Potential of application sometime in the future, benefit only implied).

That perceived <u>benefit</u> of the management idea was seen as coming a <u>short time after idea introduction</u> (actual or potential) (Benefit in the near future).

Application based on the belief that a <u>benefit</u> was perceived to come from that application at <u>some future time</u> (Benefit sometime in the far future).

<u>Leadership</u>

Seventeen comments were made which related to the value of the idea in increasing communication, breaking down barriers and involving employees in problem-solving. These comments placed a value upon communication as a means of creating openness and trust. Increased communication empowered lower level employees. It was therefore judged that these

comments had the echoes of *leadership* as their focus. Open communication was the infrastructural base of an open style of leadership which has been promoted during the 1980s.

Human nature

Originally conceptualised as value based upon the idea possessing a clear model of man (either as good or bad), it was extended to a manager's own awareness of him/herself, and not just of others. Understanding "how one ticked" and that, if one chose, one could change/improve one's behaviour.

Individual focus

Originally conceptualised as an idea focusing on **other individuals** (mainly subordinates) and thereby make them more effective. This category is extended to include ideas on how to increase individual feedback on **one's own performance** to make oneself more effective.

Predictability

The need of managers for predictability was hypothesised as an important one. Apart from the 53 comments which mentioned this explicitly, a further 17 referred to the value of the idea in helping to forward-spot the key variables in the environment which needed to be considered. Such forward spotting acted to reduce surprise and increased predictability. Specific comments related to "spotting key facts", "recognising problem areas", and avoiding mistakes". This theme emerged strongly in the interviews reported later. Table 9.7 analyses the 433 reasons given by the 115 respondents for judging their nominated management ideas to be valuable.

Table 9.7:   Reasons why management ideas found valuable

Code	Reason label	No. of mentions	% of total
1.	Human nature	56	12.6
2.	Steps/principles	51	11.5
3.	Leadership focus	41	9.2
4.	Applicability	40	9.0
5.	Individual focus	39	8.8
6.	Universal application	23	5.2
7.	Control over work	21	4.7
8.	Communicability	19	4.3
9.	Unitary perspective	17	3.8
10.	Commonsense appeal	13	2.9
11.	Legitimation of management role	8	1.8
12.	Contribution-ownership potential	5	1.1
N1	Predictability	70	15.8
N2	Acts on basis of understanding	20	4.5
N3	Esteem accorded by others	1	0.2
N4	Esteem accorded by self	0	0.0
T	Timeliness of idea	19	4.3
		443	100.0

Post-hoc coding fitted the reasons into the categories revealed by the literature review. The difficult fits have already been discussed. The results of the survey broadly confirmed the relevance of the variables identified through the literature review as being the key ones. One variable which received an unexpectedly low rating was the contribution-ownership potential. Three others also received an expectedly low rating. Given the data collection method used, legitimation of management role (II); esteem accorded by others (N3); and esteem accorded by self (N4) were factors

which one would not expect a survey questionnaire of this type to reveal. The more sensitive interviewing approach would perhaps be more likely to elicit these if they were pertinent.

ANALYSIS OF MANAGERS' PROTOCOLS

The third part of the data collection involved interviews with practising managers from the local plant of an American multi-national company. The company was chosen because of the known commitment of U.S. firms to management education and training, and its structured programmes of organizational change. The eight managers interviewed were all members of the plant's senior management team and we were in their 40s and 50s. Each had been exposed to a wide range of management ideas throughout his career through course attendance, MBA completion or reading.

The research procedure involved sending each of the managers a copy of the student's questionnaire (See Appendix B) to complete in their own time. The researcher then had a meeting with each of the subjects in turn, each of which lasted an average of twenty minutes. At this meeting, the objectives of the study were outlined; the anonymity of the answers confirmed; and each subject was asked to "talk through" their questionnaire responses. These comments were tape-recorded. The researcher did not prompt the subject in any way, other than to indicate that he should move on to the next item on the questionnaire, if he had said all he wanted about the previous one. After talking through each of the items on the questionnaire, the subject was asked a concluding question by the researcher. Once this final response was recorded, the subject was thanked and the interview terminated.

The tapes were then typed-up to produce a verbatim transcript. The subjects' comments were placed on the left side of the page so as to leave space for indexed interpretations to be put on the right hand side. The protocols were coded into their *noemic* elements (elements the subject experiences as giving value to a management idea - coded A) and their *noetic*

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elements (how these elements were experienced by the subject - coded B). The full transcripts with their associated interpretations are shown in Appendix C. What did this analysis reveal?

Noema

First, it confirmed the findings of both the literature review and of the managers' survey, as to what were the appealing elements in a management idea. The reader can assess the researcher's interpretations by turning to Appendix C. The noemic elements in the transcript are highlighted in pink, and the associated interpretation is coded A alongside. Table 9.8 summarises the findings of the analysis.

Table 9.8: The Noetic Table: Elements in management ideas that subject experienced as giving them value.

				Case					
		FI	CA	CO	FO	D	L	E	H
1.	Management control								
2.	Management legitimation				•			•	
3.	Applicability (quick pay-off)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
4.	Steps or principles	•	•	•	•				
5.	Communicability	•		•	•		•		
6.	Unitary perspective				•	•	•		
7.	Universal application	•			•	•			
9.	Individualistic perspective		•	•			•		•
10.	Human nature model						•		
11.	Contribution/ownership	•	•	•	•				
12.	Leadership		•			•	•	•	•
	Timeliness		•	•		•	•	•	•

This table confirms several of the points made earlier. First, the broad accuracy of the elements that go to make a popular management idea. With the exception of Management control, all the elements were mentioned by at least one respondent. Second, it verifies the observation that to be considered valuable, an idea need not possess all the aforementioned elements. A corollary of this is that different managers will stress different aspects of an idea's elements in attributing value to it.

Noesis

The question here is how does the subject experience these elements. In all, eight recurring aspects of the noetic process were identified. These were labelled Revelation, Empowerment, Logical, Challenge, Correspondence, Legitimation, Integration and Timeliness. It would help readers if, at this point, they read through the eight interview protocols and the indexed interpretations made by the researcher. These can be found in Appendix C, The indexed interpretations of the noetic elements are coded B, and are highlighted in yellow. It is simplest to summarize each of the seven aspects drawing on examples from the protocols themselves.

Revelation

This is the notion of individual conversion, in a quasi-religious way. The manager moves from scepticism to true belief in the management idea, despite at times, harbouring initial scepticism and suspicion. The change is sudden, dramatic and total. Past errors (of thought and action) are confessed. The (new) true way is confirmed by a rejection of the notion that alternative strategies might be possible. The "Paul-on-the-road-to--Damascus" syndrome is captured in some of the subjects' language. Revelation is experienced as "a bit of an eye-opener", "like a penny dropping", "like a veil being lifted" and as something that is a "whole new way of thinking" and "kind of illuminates". That which is revealed varies. The reasons for past (inexplicable) failures in the company may be revealed. Alternatively, a fundamental shift in perspective may occur as to how to proceed in order to attain a desired future goal or objective.

Such a revelation does not appear to come from the provision of utterly new, previously unavailable knowledge. Rather, the effect of the idea is to produce a shift in perception on the part of the manager. The psychologist's "Figure - Ground" concept is the best analogy. It is not that there is anything new in the picture. What changes is the way the different elements in it are highlighted. The idea of Materials Requirements Planning (MRP) is a good illustration. In trying to reduce costs, many managers focused on labour costs. As a management idea, MRP reminded them that, in many organizations, these represented only 20 per cent of the total cost, while materials accounted for over 70 per cent. Another illustration comes from the launch in 1991, of a chocolate snack by Cadbury's called Strollers. John Taylor, the company's marketing director said,

"We purposely made the ingredients familiar, because we were not trying to come out with a completely new taste. It's the combination that creates the product's distinctiveness."

(Daily Telegraph, 1991: 32-3)

The concept of figure - ground can explain why, once revealed such management ideas are treated as simultaneously significant (in the words of subjects as "impressive", "weighty" or "mighty") and, also as insignificant ("trite", "commonsense" and "a truism"). This is a process of re-positioning the non-threatening "old", rather than imposing the intimidating "new", may account for manager appeal and acceptance.

Empowerment

Empowerment refers to the feeling of increased power to attain success. The literature review hypothesised that management ideas which were perceived to offer managers increased power and control over their work and environment would exert an appeal. However, given the sensitive nature of this point, it was not expected that the survey questionnaires would reveal

this. It was hoped, nevertheless, that the managers' protocols might reveal this element if it existed. The protocols show that empowerment is experienced by a number of managers. It may be experienced as enabling them to make changes in their organization.

A management idea is experienced as empowering by the manager in that it directs his attention to those aspects or topics where actions are likely to produce the greatest benefits. CO says that "it helps me to deal with quality and helps me change staff's behaviours...". It can empower by replacing a muddling-through (non-purposeful activity) approach of those who have a problem and are "lost", with an objectively analysed direction for action (a "driving vision"). CO observed "it's valuable because it means I can focus on the measures for ..", while F saw the idea providing "aspects that we could focus on and get some leverage out of". On occasions, the management idea may give managers the wherewithal to make changes. At other times, empowerment is experienced as permitting the manager to function independently, giving him control over his own actions and results, and thereby reducing his dependence on others.

One can identify recurring similarities in the language used by the respondents. The predominant word used is *focus*. In photographic terminology, the subject of the photo is brought into sharp focus. The surroundings are intentionally blurred to avoid distraction. Detailed reproduction is valued. Such isolation is a prelude to action. The deployment of resources over a narrow area or upon a specific identified target is likely to increase effectiveness. E talked about "getting right to the heart of things" and valued the way the idea enabled him "to direct all that energy" effectively.

Logical

In this case, the constituent elements of a management idea are perceived by the manager as linking actions to desired outcomes. Subjects described sequences of activities (developed from their valuable management idea). Such a sequence was held to "make sense". It was thereby defined as "simple" by them. Internally, the subjects were able to achieve an

understanding of the proposed causal chain, and may have experienced a sense of relief from that comprehension. Subject F felt that to be valuable, a management idea had to be,

> "... *logical, it would have ....to be something that we had not thought of before but, when you were exposed to it, it would have to make sense, you know, kind of advance your understanding, but fit in with, once you were aware of the concept, 'Yes I can see that type of thing', as opposed to 'Well, you may say that, but I just can't relate to it".*

Ideas experienced as logical have another benefit, one which goes back to Frederick Taylor and scientific management. The notions of logic and commonsense (with which it is often linked), carry with them a spurious objectivity. Within the organizational context, the aim is to achieve controlled performance towards collective goals. For the most part, this process requires management direction and carries the possibility of conflict. However, if an idea can the sold as being logical, that is, possessing a rational and justification of its own (somehow independent of management and workers), then the chances of acceptability are increased while those of conflict are reduced.

Such perceived logic can reside in the idea tools. D talked about how one such tool, "impressed us with its objectivity" and was accepted by those on whom it was used, "the folks themselves really said that's captured me, that's me to a tee, yup, I wouldn't argue with that, whereas my heart was in my mouth a little bit, because I thought the people would cry foul and this ain't fair..".

Challenge

Some management ideas were experienced as challenging. That is, as opposing taken-for-granted ways of thinking and doing things. Subject E referred, "to opening himself up", "letting yourself take a look at a few things

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in spite of the pre-conceived notions that you might have" and "dropping barriers'.   Underlying these comments there seemed to be the notion of individuals taking a risk to escape from some sort of mental cage that they had constructed for themselves.   The ideas and their associated tools acted to temporarily bring people together in new ways.   D commented that it, "forced people to really look hard at what was required of them". Davis (1971) argued that challenges to taken-for-granted assumptions generated reader interest.   When a management ideas says that what you think is not so, then you tend to take notice.

Correspondence

The notion of correspondence is perhaps best expressed in terms of a link. The establishment of that link by the subject imbued the idea with innate value and gave the subject confidence in its use.   There may be a link between the an idea itself and an individual's perceived practices and beliefs. Subject H tells us that, "I found that ... [the idea] ... fascinating, but then again it was compatible with the way I like to think I'm doing business".   This comment is particularly instructive since it reminds us that correspondence is with a subject's self-image, and not necessarily the reality.   CA commented that "it's something that you think you always do and we certainly didn't do it in such a rigorous way".

Some new ideas are experienced as "striking a chord" in a person and "harmonizing with their thinking", that is, creating an inner resonance with something already known or experienced by the subject.   There is an analogy here with the body's immune system which defends it from disease. This resonance appears to permit an idea to penetrate the individual's defences which might be expected to reject it.   The resonance acts to define the idea as "commonsense" and thereby as not representing a threat to the person's self-image.   Thus new applications of old (accepted) ideas represent another version of this commonsense.

In his description, CA stressed his commitment to and comfort with a scientific approach to technical work and management.   Discussing the new idea of Total Quality Management (TQM), CA explained how it

corresponded with, and could be incorporated into his preferred scientific approach. He also expressed the view that, "the two have come together very well I think". Alternatively, the correspondence may be between the management idea and some memorable experience of failure or success in the past. Respondent L mentioned that, "I could relate back to when I naively set up committees". Furnham and Singh (1987) reported the selective-recall hypothesis which suggested that people remembered information better that was congruent with their attitudes. Their attitudes and beliefs acted as a sort of organizing framework that supports the encoding and retrieval of attitude-supporting material.

The correspondence may be with the company's culture including its value system. Subject E said that, "We all agree on this ... [idea] ... has been to our mind the most satisfying of recent years and I like to think it matches up with most people's values...". Also at the organizational level, in the words of a subject, the idea, "represented an attractive way of looking at the need for change". Thus, while individuals and companies may acknowledge the need to be challenged in order to change, some approaches are preferred to others.

Legitimation

Some ideas were experienced as justifying the views and past actions of their subjects. The literature review drew attention to the notion of management legitimation. This was expressed in terms of the idea's role in giving managers a legitimate status within the workplace, and perhaps confirming their indispensability to the work process. Such a notion of legitimation was most attractive in the past when industrialization, and the replacement of the entrepreneurial owner with the hired manager made the role of management more tenuous than it now is at the end of the century. One can see these issues in the writings and ideas of the scientific and administrative management schools.

It may be that legitimation is still relevant today but at a personal rather than organizational level. It is the legitimation of a manager's own views to others in the organization, rather than the legitimation of his managerial role

in society. When a well-known management author is perceived to affirm a manager's views and actions, that can act to raise his self-esteem. When such views have been publicly voiced, the self-confirmation brought about by the official voicing of an idea may also raise his social standing. FO said ".. it ... [the idea] ... was good because it confirmed some of the thoughts I had that ... it was good to have some authoritative reference ..."

Integration

Some subjects experienced a feeling of closure as disparate insights, theories, experiences became integrated by means of a management idea. A feeling of satisfaction was achieved as the subjects had the opportunity to re-structure their existing knowledge into a whole which was more meaningful for them. CO commented that, "I like it because it brings together all the various theories and models" and allows him to, "integrate all the various models which come across". E explained that the value of the idea came, "only when I was able to put them in context of a threat to the company". H valued a book which put all the issues together, "in a rather nice way, so that stimulated me again". Gestalt research has shown how satisfying such closure is for individuals.

Timeliness

The timeliness of a management idea is a function of the external environment and the manager's current needs and problems. The analysis confirms that some ideas at least, come through a "window of opportunity", while others may be perceived to have an on-going relevance. The comments of the various subjects highlight this co-incidence of of idea and need.

"That stimulated me because I was in the quality business at the time"; "organizational behaviour is so topical here today and it's the way we're trying to do it" (H); ".. working hard of course to change the leadership style in the company and that is why it is very relevant to us today" (D); "I believe that is probably our greatest need right at the minute .."; "I think I was ready then to pick up responsibility for total quality management" (CA).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented data primarily, but not exclusively about managers' evaluations of management ideas. Both the survey, and the main data collection activity, the protocol analysis, revealed a strong link with the hypotheses generated by the literature review. The purpose was to gain an understanding of the managerial valuation process. While a great deal is still to be examined, some of the main findings can be offered as suggestions for aspiring management gurus. These will be presented in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Introduction

Step 1: Analyse the environment

Step 2: Analyse consumer needs

Step 3 : Build desirable attributes into management ideas

Step 4: Promote the management idea

Towards a sociology of management knowledge application

INTRODUCTION

This concluding chapter seeks to summarise the main findings of the research and to highlight a number of potential directions for future research. The basic research question of this study can be re-stated. What distinguishes popular management ideas from less popular ones, and how can one use such knowledge to become a well-paid and famous management guru? The findings of this study provide some answers to these questions. It is therefore intended to present the summary section of this chapter as a series of steps that aspiring management gurus can take when seeking their fame and fortune in the field of management consultancy. The recommendations are made on the basis of the findings of the empirical study and the literature reviews.

It is worth re-stating that popular management ideas represent an infinitesimally small percentage of all the management ideas developed and taught in the last hundred years. An analysis of this small number of successful ideas revealed key features which are held to influence management idea popularity. These are shown in the Figure 10.1. which is an adapted manager behaviour model taken from the marketing literature. In the light of this research knowledge, how should the aspiring management guru proceed?

Figure 10.1: Manager behaviour model

OUTSIDE STIMULI	MANAGER'S BLACK BOX	MANAGER DECISION
Environmental Marketing Economic Product Technological Cultural Social Promotion	Manager needs Predictability Control Social recognition Self-esteem	Valuation of idea Purchase Implementation
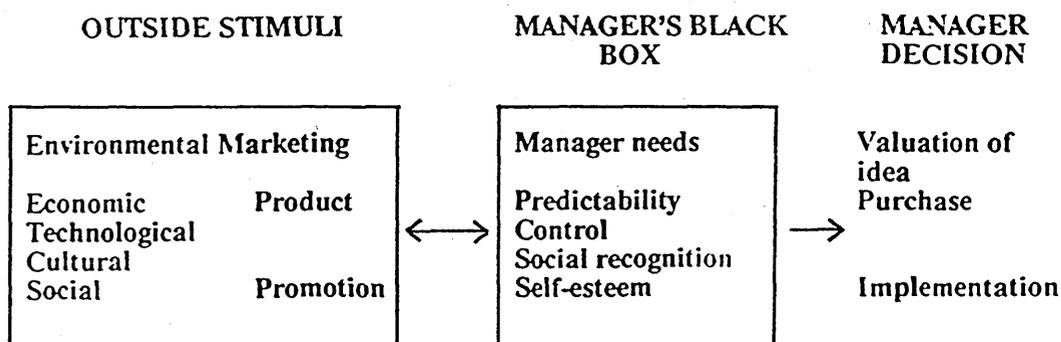
STEP 1:   ANALYSE THE ENVIRONMENT

The aspiring management guru needs to look not so much at the present environmental situation, but should engage in some futurology to identify the coming organizational concerns. Had, management consultants in 1985 been able to predict the rise of green issues, they would have had time to develop expertise, visibility and credibility in the area of corporate environmental management which would have given them a competitive advantage over their rivals.

It is probably helpful to consider the question of timing in terms of "windows of opportunity". Such windows open and close. Popular management ideas are those whose development coincides with an open one. Surprisingly perhaps, there is some evidence to suggest that once through an open opportunity window, a management idea can sustain its popularity for other reasons, even though the environmental circumstances which led to the opening of that window may have passed. Bad timing may explain the failure of the majority of management ideas.

While hindsight is an exact science, the future is less predictable. What can our hopeful guru do to anticipate and proactively grasp a coming opportunity, rather than just react passively to one that has arrived?   All large companies look into the future and create alternative scenarios based on a combination of projections of current trends and random, unforeseen circumstances (e.g. wars, political shifts, etc.).   The same can be done by business school academics and consultants.

Current projections tell us that demographic trends are reducing the numbers of young people available for the job market; of these school leavers increasing numbers are leaving the school system both innumerate and illiterate; the single European market is scheduled for 1992, and the de-communization of Eastern Europe has begun; Europe's population is rapidly ageing and the retirees are wealthier than their precedessors. None of these observations requires a crystal ball. It is possible to purchase analyses from forecast units that produce research-based reports.

Once obtained, the intending gurus need to identify what management ideas they could develop and market that would offer solutions to the company problems of the future. For example, the under-educated workforce, the decline of school leavers and the internationalization of manufacturing and trade each offer their management idea opportunities. Company schools, stores staffed by the over-50s and international teamwork training represent potential idea-based techniques of the near future.

Instead of reading reports on the future, our intending guru can look to see what is happening in the United States on the basis that what is happening there today will occur in Britain tomorrow. Alistair Cook, the well known journalist, was more specific. He recommended that America and the world should watch what was happening in California if it wanted a guide to the future.

STEP 2: ANALYSE CUSTOMER NEEDS

Manufacturers have been been encouraged to be customer- rather than product-oriented. Hence, once an environmental analysis reveals to the guru a potential future opportunity for a management idea, he needs to take into account the managerial needs identified earlier when designing and marketing his idea. Henshel (1975: 103) said that people would work for predicted states they approved of and against those that they detested. Ideas that related to forecasted futures which managers found appealing would be selected and preferred to those which they found repelling.

The literature review contained in Chapter 6 revealed a number of such managerial needs. These were predictability, control and esteem. The protocol analysis findings reported in Chapter 9 provided addition information. Design-wise, it is difficult to work with process theories of motivation. Content theories are easier since they can be used to design a management idea capable of appealing to the majority of managers. In the management idea design phase, as many of the valued attributes should be incorporated as possible to meet managerial needs.

The first of these managerial needs was the desire to have their environment explained to them by experts and thereby made less confusing and threatening. The review labelled this need Predictability. The protocol analysis highlighted similar noetic elements which were termed Revelation. The responses under this latter heading referred to the manager gaining a clearer and more accurate vision of his work environment.

In designing the management idea, our guru must taken into account managers' needs for predictability and revelation in terms of their work environments. This requires some considerable mental exertion. It is not a question of providing new, hitherto unavailable knowledge, but rather re-structuring and re-prioritizing that which is already known so that it is perceived differently (but not too differently) by managers. It involves identifying some commonplace aspect of the organizational mileau which is simultaneously well-known and yet ignored by company management. The guru identifies the opportunity it offeres to meet the aforementioned managerial needs, and then invests it with hitherto unconsidered potential. This procedure was earlier described as "figure-ground shifting". Who would have thought that the management of time by managers would secure guru status and millionaire wealth for at least one American and a Dane.

The focus of attention may be some aspect of nature (time) or an unlikely part of the organization. Fortune magazine featured an article on the problems and potential offered by the company mailroom. Alternatively, the focus may be upon an undesired management habit. A recent business magazine reported that a consultant would work with a manager to re-arrange the items cluttering his desk and so help him to clear it (desktop management guruship?).

Content-wise, the implication for apprentice gurus is that they should restrict themselves to re-working existing areas of management knowledge in new ways, rather than introducing radically different new knowledge. A review of the more popular "new" management ideas of the 1980s shows that many of them represent new wine in old bottles. The total number of bottles remains the same, but each is re-filled with new contents.

To continue the analogy, the bottles themselves are grouped differentially by kind. The personal topics have the greatest number of different types, and the choice diminishes as one moves away from the individual, out towards the team and then out again towards the organizational level. The implication of this, is that a management idea which addresses an individual's inner or outer self, is likely to have the greatest impact. The continuing appeal of the Dale Carnegie books and their imitators over decades supports this view. Figure 10.2 summarises the main topic areas.

The protocol analysis also drew attention to the value placed by managers on macro-type ideas which integrate into a single whole, previously held separate micro-ideas. To help the manager achieve this satisfying feeling of integration, one can recommend that our guru should not only re-package an idea towards the left of Figure 10.2 but should also integrate it with one or two others from the adjacent columns. Quality circles, one of the most popular management ideas of the 1980s, successfully integrates elements of group leadership, teamworking, problem-solving, interviewing, delegating and public speaking. Integration, once again, involves the notion of creating a non-threatening "new" idea from a set of known, non-threatening "old" ones.

The second identified management need develops from the first. The issues here go beyond the question of how one perceives the environment, and consider the potential of the idea to guide managers to the really important issues. The idea offers them the tools with which to intervene in order to bring about changes. Having had their view of their organization and its problems re-structured, managers want the knowledge, confidence, tools and "consultant's permission" to implement the changes judged to be necessary. Chapter 6's analysis called these control needs and the protocol analysis in Chapter 9 labelled these Empowerment.

It appears that managers want the guru to identify for them which of the myriad factors in their environment are the crucial ones (and thus need to be focused and acted upon) and distinguish those that can be safety ignored. The management guru unequivocally and assuredly says to managers, "Pay attention to this, but not to that. This will get you to where you need to go

Figure 10.1: Management ideas classed by personal impact.

SELF	INNER SELF	OUTER SELF	INTER-PERSON	GROUP	ORGANIZATION
	Self-confidence Stress management Learning styles Personality type	Rapid reading Writing skills Assertiveness Listening Problem solving Decision making Body language Goal setting	Delegating Communicating Appraising Motivating Interpersonal skills Counselling Interviewing Questioning Criticising Negotiating	Group leadership Running meetings Teamworking Public speaking	Quality management Searching for excellence Customer care Managing change

better and faster." It is here that the guarded disclaimers (ifs and buts) of traditional business school academics contrast with the confident, unambiguous (but not necessarily any more correct) assertions of the management gurus.

Managers also want permission from the guru to go ahead and implement the action. This may be either to gain extra confidence and support for their actions, or perhaps to absolve them from the final responsibility should something go wrong. Having highlighted the organizational processes which managers need to focus on, the next imperative for the gurus is to ensure that their idea possesses the associated techniques which managers will perceive as likely to bring about the desired changes. These will be considered in greater depth in the next step.

The third and final management need that was identified related to esteem. This included not only the worth or value attributed to the individual by him or herself, but also that accorded to them by others. The analysis in Chapter 6 referred to meeting social and personal needs and Chapter 9's protocol analysis referred to Legitimation. Advertisers have long known that a product purchase fulfils both functional and emotional needs. The empirical research in this thesis did not empirically investigate the areas to be discussed in this section. One is here in the realm of psycho-analytical writings as concepts such as identification and projection are examined. Hence the suggestions and interpretations are necessarily speculative and should be treated as such. They also highlight the opportunity for additional research.

Feelings of increased self-worth or self-esteem can be experienced when one's views or actions are judged to be meritorious by outside experts. This is the case of finding that one's own opinion about some aspect of management is confirmed by a well known management writer or speaker. The distinguishing feature is that only the manager realises that the "expert agrees with him". Since the expert is perceived to legitimate the manager's previously held views, he and his writings are accorded increased value.

Earlier it was suggested that by promoting the ideas of a hero-manager or consultant guru, the manager identified himself with that admired individual. Teenagers identify with, and "live through", their pop idols. One can speculate that a similar process may occur here. Both the American and British business press reports the activities of managerial and entrepreneurial heroes who are written about and revered. A constant diet of such articles over the years must indicate that this is the type of copy that management readers of these journals enjoy.

Social esteem, in contrast, refers to the positive assessment made of the individual by others. These may be professional colleagues or senior managers inside or outside of the organization. It is not possible to explicitly recommend how the guru can take cognizance of the self-esteem need when designing the management idea (since each manager will have his own set of personal managerial beliefs which are hidden from the guru). The social

esteem needs however, revealed by the literature review and protocol analysis, are more transparent and are thus capable of a greater degree of manipulation.

The guru can create a management-idea product whose adoption will be perceived by the manager as offering him the possibility of social - esteem enhancement. How might this be done? Social esteem can be gained by emulating others, that is, adhering to the group norms. If the norm is to introduce quality circles, then the manager can show solidarity with his opposite numbers by committing his company to the same idea. Hence, our guru should cite examples of similar applications in other companies, and explain that great benefits were obtained in a short time. Success of implementation can also give the manager an opportunity to boast about his achievements.

Social esteem can additionally be gained if the manager presents himself as the idea champion. In a number of organizations, the promotion of the latest management fad by a manager has been used to help him gain company-wide visibility in the promotion stakes.
Management idea championing can represent a low-risk way of signalling to those with the power to promote that the manager is not adverse to change, does not mind challenging established views, but that while he is prepared to look critically at the system in which he works, but is not someone who will unduly "rock the organizational boat".

Further esteem can be gained if the idea is not of the black-box variety, that is, if it offers (and is seen to offer) the championing manager scope to make his own unique contribution to it. This in turn gives him greater ownership of the idea in the perception of others. It might be thought that this is a high-risk strategy, since the idea may fail to yield the expected benefits. As was pointed out earlier in the thesis, assessments of success and failure tend to be very vague in this area, and all parties concerned have a vested interest in not admitting to failure.

STEP 3: BUILD DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES INTO MANAGEMENT IDEA

The third step is for gurus to incorporate the customer-desired features into their management ideas. These respond to the main managerial needs as discussed in the previous step. They also assist in the promotion of their ideas as will be discussed in the fourth and final step. The research findings did provide a guide as to which attributes of popular management ideas were considered most important. In addition, it was shown earlier that not all of the major management ideas contained all of the attributes. The priority order of idea attributes can give a guide to the guru's design procedure.

3.1   Human nature

Our guru needs to immediately and unequivocally establish that where his idea relates to people (and the majority of the popular ideas concern themselves exclusively with people management), it sees their behaviour as being the consequence of law-like, cause-and-effect processes which are capable of being manipulated. The corollary of this is to avoid giving the impression that their idea assumes that humans are in any way anarchic, meaning-creating or self-choosers. The idea should stress that people are bound by the laws of nature and social science, and are purposeful creatures who who act to satisfy their needs.

Related to this, our consultant's idea should reinforce the consensual or commonsense belief that people are basically good, altruistic, intelligent and so on.   While researchers like Milgram (1974) and Zimbardo et al. (1974) have demonstrated that people can be cruel, uninsightful, self-centred, and anti-social, their chances of them ever becoming management gurus are small (Furnam, 1990).

By establishing the baseline assertions that people are basically good and are triggered by external influences, the guru can then go on to explain how the manager can manipulate worker behaviour by exploiting these externals. Such views of human nature have the quality of self-fulfilling prophecies and derive from value-based assumptions rather than from scientific facts. Their

very advocacy can bring about what was first claimed or pretended to be inevitable. By basing themselves upon such a view of human nature, the guru's ideas also place themselves beyond the realm of scientific investigation, and become more like a social philosophy. This in turn makes them more easily defensible in the face of hostile, empirically-based challenges.

A modern management idea which promotes this malleable view of man is Adair's Action Centred Leadership (ACL). It is premised on an image of what it is to be a person at work. Readers and listeners recognise and identify with this image to a large degree. Individuals are seen as belonging to a group, as needing recognition and competition, craving meaning, and liking to be informed and asked for views. ACL tells managers that employees can be handled if they are approached in the right way from the outset. They can motivate and discipline themselves, and do not always put money first.

3.2   Steps and principles

The next important element in a management idea is to kit it out with a set of associated techniques which contain a series of steps or target principles which the manager can understand and believe he can use. The purpose of these checklists, roadmaps, guides and associated idea-implementation technology is reduce managers' anxieties about travelling safely from where they are to where would like to be. It shows them how the management ideas can be put into practice.

Discussing how a book of such length as Peters and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence* achieved managerial appeal and came to be widely quoted in company circles, Godfrey (1985: 25) wrote that, *"The ISOE formula of reducing ideas to easily remembered steps to success may have been the only thing that could have enticed such a large number of managers."*. Those management ideas which have achieved popularity have tended to give users either a clear set of detailed principles (e.g. Fayol's span-of-control) or else have offered them a detailed step-by-step guide to what should be done and

how ("Deming's 14 Step Roadmap"). The idea of Total Quality Management for example, is supported by a plethora of principles and implementation technology. Kanter (1985: 249) may have complained about the:

> "... imposition of mindless formulae for action - giving people a set of role motions to go through that have worked somewhere else or have been specified in minute detail. This is the problem with many packaged programmes that have been sold to U.S. companies under the 'participation-and- ' label. The 'and-' generally refers to productivity improvement or morale".

However, as someone who is reputed to have charged $17,000 an hour consultancy fee in 1987, she can afford to be dismissive. She did reluctantly acknowledge that the "formulaic nature of guidance" did appeal to managers. She noted that many American corporations were fond of what she termed the "appliance model of organizational change". This involved buying a complete programme, such as a quality improvement package from a dealer, plugging it in, and hoping that it would run itself. Hill (1971: 13) observed that:

> "A feature of the package approach to organization development, which is often attractive to managements is that they seem to present a clear and logical path to organizational improvement whereas other less structured approaches may appear somewhat vague and risky by comparison."

Finally, one might note Gellner (1985: 25) who studied the ideas of the philosopher Nietzche. He asked why it was that his ideas did not gain as wide an appeal as those of Freud (which were based on Nietzche's). He concluded that while Nietzche sketched his ideas out in a loose, general and unspecific way, Freud's presentation was full of laws, and offered a concrete and identifiable position and technique through which individuals could achieve their goals in the face of real problems.

One might even add that the success of Berne's (1967) Transactional Analysis (TA) model owes much to the fact that he made the basic ideas even more specific and step-guided. He took Freud's notion of ego, superego and id, and relabelled them Parent, Child and Adult. Berne showed clearly what principles should guide your behaviour, how to understand the behaviour of others (in terms of "games"), and demonstrated the steps required to respond effectively to the behaviour of others (counter games). Transactional analysis has been one of the most popular ideas in the neo-human relations family.

Both the theoretical and empirical evidence confirms the value of gurus working out their ideas in terms of guiding principles or a roadmap of activities for their customers to follow under their guidance (for a substantial fee).

3.3   Leadership focus

In order to be successful, our guru 's idea has in some way to focus upon, or at least strongly allude to the notion of leadership. Ideally, the word *leadership* should be incorporated in its title. The Economist reported in 1988 that leadership had become a hot topic of business education. In fact, the author would argue that in the history of management ideas, leadership has never been cold! The article went on to ask:

> *"What is it?   What is the difference between leadership and managerial ability?   Whatever the answers, the questions themselves are enough to guarantee a place for 'Leadership' on many a business school curriculum; they inspire arcane articles on the subject;   they fill conference seats with would-be leaders bottoms."*

> The Economist, 25 June, 1988c, pp. 106-7

This research suggests that the concept of leadership is one of the most important ingredients of a popular management idea. To say that the managerial book buying public is obsessed with leadership may not be too great an exaggeration. The 1980s saw a continuing interest in leadership in the context of managing major corporate transformations. Anderson et al. (1985) studied seventeen companies that had been re-vitalised, and they identified "a championing leader" as a major success factor. Other top selling authors have put the idea of leadership centre stage as the following quotations indicate:

" ... *what we found was that associated with almost every excellent company was a strong leader (or two) who seemed to have a lot to do with making the company excellent in the first place.*"

Peters and Waterman (1982: 26)

"This book was written in the belief that leadership is the pivotal force behind successful organizations and that to create vital and viable organizations, leadership is necessary to help organizations develop a new vision of what they can be, then mobilize the organization change towards the new vision."

Bennis and Nanus (1985: 2-3)

"But leadership at the top - the orchestrator of strategy and organization - and the leader's ability to instil and institutionalize that leadership throughout the enterprise emerge in our view as the distinguishing characteristics of winning performance among midsize high growth companies."

Clifford and Cavanagh (1986: 231)

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What accounts for such an interest in the topic of leadership? Two explanations are offered. The first relates to raising the self-esteem of the individual manager. Blackler and Shimmin (1984: 52) wrote about the "myth of leadership" and claimed that the subject provoked an aura of romance and mythology that was deeply ingrained in our culture. They felt that such myths might be considered as ideological preferences and went on to quote four of these. These were that leaders were invariably important; that effective leaders possessed particular personality characteristics; that particular leadership styles were more effective than others; and that simple contingency models of leadership could be devised.

The first two myths are particularly relevant here. In Blacker and Shimmin's view, the myth of the importance of the leader developed because those who occupied leadership roles often felt frustrated and ineffectual. Hence they tended to be attracted to those management ideas which reinforced their own views as to how they would <u>like</u> to see themselves. Dunkerley (1975: 96) noted that some writers had identified the leader as the linch-pin in the organization:

> *"Organization theory has long assumed that the effectiveness of an organization is, in part, dependent on the nature of the leadership within the organization. In a more extreme case, some writers have gone so far as to as to say that the survival of the organization is dependent on leader behaviour. McGregor's assumptions in Theory Y (1960) and Likert's System 4 (1961) would suggest this close relationship between the organization and leadership."*

The second myth concerns the possession of traits. No single trait has been found to be associated with effective leadership. Nevertheless, the strength of popular imagery in the field has made the approach appealing to managers. Since every desirable human characteristic has, at one time or another, been associated with effective leadership, all managers are likely to possess at least some of what have been claimed to be characteristics of effective leadership. Thus the trait approach allows managers at different levels in the hierarchy to draw comfort from the belief that they have

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achieved their success by virtue of their superior individual qualities. Thus, management comes to be seen as an exclusive club with selection criteria that all managers can meet in their own way. All are thus special and acceptable in different ways. The promotional literature discussed in Chapter 5 supports this point.

The second explanation for the popularity of leadership relates to its ability to explain the inexplicable. Certain other writers (Calder, 1977; Pfeffer, 1977a) have treated leadership as one of the ways in which people came to understand the causes of important organizational events and outcomes. Leadership appears to have been sanctified and been given a key role in our phenomenal constructs of organized activities and their outcomes. Meidel and Erlich (1987) noted that as an explanatory concept, leadership possessed a heroic, larger-than life value. They wrote that:

> "... the romanticised concept of leadership denotes a strong belief - a faith - in the importance of leadership factors to the functioning and dysfunctioning of organized systems. It implies that leadership is the premier force in the scheme of organizational events and occurrences. It can be considered as an assumption, pre-conception or bias that interested observers and participants bring to bear when they must find an intellectually compelling and emotionally satisfying comprehension of the cause, nature and consequences of organized activities. It is the way many prefer to cope and come to grips with the cognitive and morale complexities of understanding the myriad interactions among causal forces that create and maintain organized activity - forces that are often unknowable and undeterminant, perhaps even objectionable. It reduces and translates these complexities into simple human terms that they can understand, live with and communicate easily to others. "

> Meidel and Erlich (1987: 92)

Meindl, Erlich and Dukerich (1985) examined the prominence of the leadership concept as evidenced by the great volume of research literature on the topic. They felt that the status and significance of leadership had been elevated to a level where the concept had gained a brilliance that exceeded the limits of normal scientific enquiry. They went on to discuss the imagery and mythology of leadership, and the mystery and near mysticism with which it had become imbued.

They argued that the romanticised concept of leadership resulted from the biased preferences of individuals to understand important but causally unattributable or ambiguous organizational events and outcomes in terms of leadership. For example, lacking the necessary information with which to explain the causes of a decline or an improvement in a company's fortunes, the change came to be attributed to inspired leadership. Leadership thus becomes a residual, "catch-all" explanatory category.

A review of American management publications by Meindl et al. (1985) confirmed the proposition that the perceived causal priority of, and attributions to leadership understanding occurred when company performance was either very good or very bad. They also found a greater than average interest in leadership amongst scholars at particularly good or particularly bad economic times. In contrast, interest in leadership in the general community was greatest only during economic upswings. From this evidence the authors concluded that the romanticised concept of leadership viewed leaders as possessing the power to influence and even control the fates of the organizations in their charge. Leaders thus received credit for success and the blame for failure.

These writers argued that given the complexity of the business and organizational world, a non-random process took place amongst its observers. It was based on their understanding of psychology and sociology and led to a systematic bias in understanding the organizational system. Apart from the intellectual satisfaction that such an explanation offered observers, it also boosted the morale of the observed manager/leader by ascribing control and responsibility for events and outcomes to which they

could be plausibly linked. Coincidentally, the focus on leadership reinforced the appeal of other attractions such as control, legitimation and individual focus which will be discussed later in this section.

The current interest in the "transformational leader" (Tichy and Devanna, 1986), as someone who not merely manages but who also transforms a seriously threatened business, merely perpetuates the romanticised vision of leadership. In this scenario, the saviour-manager has a vision of the direction that the organization should take and energises its members to effect the changes. The literature informs readers that transformational leaders require gritty determination combined with sensitivity! The flexible leader knows when and how to flex his management style.

Whatever their ideas, our apprentice gurus need to find a leadership "angle" on them, and then give them an appropriate label - tranformational, action-centred, synergistic, group, inspirational, any adjective will do. The idea should indicate that managers already possess the innate qualities, and should imply that the idea will contribute to the mystery of leadership.

3.4 Applicability

Applicability refers to the dual notion that the proposed management idea possesses a practical application that will produce a benefit (pay-off), and that such a pay-off can be attained within a short period of time. Let us consider these two aspects in turn. Pay-off pertains to management's perception that the idea or its technique will actually provide the benefits or gains claimed for it. Such benefits might be explicit such as reduced costs, increased quality, fewer industrial disputes, or a more committed workforce. Other perceived benefits might be hidden. For example, the adoption of job enrichment, ostensibly introduced to give workers more discretion over their work and hence offer them greater work satisfaction, might be a way for management to keep its control over the work process intact in the face of union pressure. Thus, it is not always clear what management may see as the major pay-off of any particular management idea. Oliver (1990) discussed the highly visible pay-off offered by J-I-T.

Whatever the benefit, it is frequently difficult for the guru to objectively demonstrate the effectiveness of a particular management technique (i.e. that the effort and resources going in are less than the benefits coming out). Producers of packaged programmes produce statistics to "prove" cost savings. More often, they rely on indirect methods. By listing their past customers they imply that these have found the product or service offered to be beneficial. From this perspective, our gurus need to build a client list and display it prominently in their advertising literature.

A second dimension of applicability is speed of pay-off. Any management idea that offers the possibility of quick results gives its promoter a competitive edge. An early feature of American industrial psychology consultancy was the acceptance of its value by managers. This consultancy tradition has, in the opinion of some writers, often favoured a short cut to rapid results in a highly competitive market (Rose, 1978: 193). Reich (1984: 164) wrote that:

> *"Managers who anticipate a short tenure with their firm unsurprisingly have little interest in the long-term solutions to basic problems. Their goal is to make the firm (and themselves) look as good as possible in the immediate future."*

Judson (1987) cited a study of 236 executives from 195 U.S. industrial corporations who were questioned about their beliefs about productivity programmes. He found that most had short term time horizons and were on the look-out for quick-fix productivity enhancement solutions. Three quarters of the respondents said that their company programmes had time horizons of less than a year, and only 22% claimed a horizon of 1-3 years. Management's concern with short term results was identified by 30% of respondents as being the single most important reason for America's declining productivity.

To be popular therefore, a management guru has to ensure that his idea and its technique are perceived as offering swift and tangible results. Note the word "offer". It might not actually deliver these, but that is a different matter. In its promotion (including explanation) the buyer must feel that practical benefits can be secured in the short-term (whether or not they actually are).

3.5   Individual focus

As a generalization, one can say that a management idea that focuses upon the individual is likely to receive more attention and gain greater popularity than one which focuses on abstract or macro-level issues. Our guru has to avoid organizational structure issues, and get his idea focused on the individual. Willmott (1987: 249) criticised empirical studies of managerial work in companies which abstracted the activities of individual managers from the institutional arrangements in and through which they acted. He added that most theories looked:

> "... *upon differences of individual behaviour or group allegiance and not upon managerial work as expressive of the (developing) institutional arrangements that are at once a condition as well as a consequence of managers' actions".*

Salaman (1978: 198) argued that amongst the "morally sustaining ideas" of organizations was that of *structuralism*. This held that the way in which organizations were structured was beyond choice and was instead the outcome of modern, scientific and rational principles and outside forces which were beyond everyone's control. Once it was accepted that the structure of an organization was the outcome of such neutral principles and pressures (and not ideologies or vested interests), the events which occurred within the organization, including the individual employees' problems and experiences, came to be seen as being the result of employees' attitudes, abilities and competences. Since the structure of the organization was held to be given, any desired change had necessarily to take place in the behaviour

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of its members. Scientific management, human relations and most of the popular management ideas in history have emphasised individual behaviour. As Argyris (1957: 143) put it:

> "... management thinks the fault lies in the employees (not in the company, management's leadership, management controls and human relations programmes). It is the employee who must be changed."

Watson (1977) reported a fondness amongst managers for depending upon a type of "individualistic folk psychology" rather than upon the subtle interplay of structural and behavioural variables. From this perspective, understanding "how people tick" was emphasised over and above "setting up the right organization". Watson's explanation for this was that the pressure on managers to become involved in fire-fighting tasks did not give them the opportunity to reflect upon structural issues. Fox made the same observation when he wrote about the:

> "... popular tendency amongst managers and the general public to exaggerate the importance of personalities, personal relationships, and personal leadership as determinants of behaviour ... Such views were highly acceptable to "commonsense" which is ever ready in this field to seek explanations in terms of personalities and personal relationships."

> Fox (1966: 15)

Legge (1978: 48-9) argued that when managers sought social science inputs from external management consultants, they preferred psychological rather than sociological models and solutions. Klein (1976) noted that the

managers at Esso whom she studied, tended to explain their problems in structural (sociological) terms but looked for solutions only in terms of personality characteristics. Forrest made the point that:

> *"The psychological construct forms a diffuse and pervasive background against which nearly all organizational life is understood. The legitimacy of that construct is reinforced by the fact that psychological notions, usually but not always in de-based or simplistic form, constitute major axes around which the public at large understands social reality. Facile psychologizing can be heard in any park bench or in any parked car. Thus it is no wonder that the psychological version is never seriously challenged, either for its inherent limitations, or in terms of its legitimate alternatives."*

> Forrest (1984: 53)

These and other authors contend that the "natural" mode of explaining human behaviour is psychological rather than in sociological terms. Moreover, the trials of everyday life create the need for such explanations. Gellner (1985: 17) used the French phrase *pays reel* to refer to the nature of our feelings, drives and relationships as we know them to be from our experience of life. He referred to the pays reel of the human mind which he labelled, as "reality is other people". Briefly summarized it suggests that the types of situations which satisfy or disturb us most (managers included) are those which involve other people. In particular, those people with whom we have persistent, intimate and emotionally charged relationships. What mattered above all, claimed Gellner, were those relationships which involved power and submission.

The argument is that managers place an excessive emphasis on the individual as responsible for organizational behaviour. This is called psychologism. When things go wrong, a psychologistic interpretation of the problem would tend to blame the individuals involved, rather than control, appraisal or training systems. By ignoring structural and technological issues, the

company can also side-step any discussion of political and power issues. Indeed, it has been argued by some writers (Nord,1974; Stevenson, 1975; Alderfer, 1977; and Stephenson, 1985) that it may have been this single fact that made organizational development (OD) so popular in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. This preference is reflected in individually-focused OD interventions, and a reluctance to change structures or alter organizational power relationships. Much of OD activity involves fitting individual behaviour into the organizational plan.

Knowing the popularity of this individualistic orientation, our guru can present his idea so as to suggest that changes in organizations are ultimately determined by the leadership of managers who treat organizational personnel, using different packaged human relations cures. Huczynski and Buchanan (1982: 192) commented on how managers assumed that social and natural sciences were comparable and believed that it was possible to use the same methods. Managers looked for tools and techniques with which to "repair" individual employees who manifested human relations problems.

3.6   Universal application

Our management gurus need to unequivocally assert that their ideas have a universal applicability. This will enhance their popular appeal. There are two ways in which universal application can be claimed. The first of these is *content* universality (as in the case of bureaucracy, administrative management or human relations ideas). The content universalists argue that all organizations share fundamentally the same features. Thus, the specific idea prescriptions offered (e.g. span-of-control, human relations training for supervisors) can be applied to all of them. Perrow commented that this view assumed that what worked in one place would work in another. A second approach is to claim *process* universality as in the case of scientific management ideas. The process universalists claim to have, not a single best solution, but a single best process to arrive at the best solution in the circumstances.

What is significant here is that the management idea and its technique should be capable of being applied in a wide range of different situations. In contrast, situational specificity contributes to an idea's demise and may partly explain the faddish nature of management ideas which suddenly appear and then equally suddenly disappear. Lorsch made the same point arguing that such factors as a manager's personality, types of employees and decision-making processes affected the appropriateness of a technique to its situation. He noted that:

"They are applied successfully in a few companies where conditions are right, and receive attention and publicity. Without considering the differences, managers, consultants and academics alike decide the technique can be applied in other situations. Because conditions are not right, the second generation attempts are often failures, and the enthusiasm dies. "

Lorsch (1979)

For the guru such a demise is not a necessarily problem. Indeed, it can be an opportunity. Enough money can usually be made from the current popular idea before it is replaced by another. Built-in obsolence actually helps to create new markets as old ones become saturated.

Nevertheless, the problem remains of how our guru achieves such universality of appeal. When consultants prescribe certain interventions, their arguments are frequently supported by anecdotal evidence and analogical reasoning. The former consists simply of illustrative examples that suggest one possible outcome that might result from a given organizational practice. This is based on the premise that an intervention which is successful in one instance will also be successful in broadly similar circumstances. Moreover, if the package is adopted by well-known and successful companies, the mere fact of its adoption (irrespective of the success achieved) represents an endorsement of the idea or technique. This

will motivate (and perhaps pressurize) other companies to adopt it just in case it is successful. Levy-Leboyer (1987) commented on the widespread use of social science:

> *"New ideas which are easy to grasp and which answer the important problems of the day are quickly understood and applied, in fact, the simpler they are the more attractive they look. New techniques are no less tempting. In both cases, the attraction of novelty is rarely moderated by checking proof or scrutinizing available evidence. Indeed, T-groups, sensitivity training, programmed learning, uncoercive education, behavioural therapy - all were more easily accepted than powerlooms in the textile industry and robotization in automobile plants. Users of new theories and new techniques do not bother about generalizability, inter-cultural differences or statistical significance. They usually take a theory for granted as soon as it is available in print. And new techniques are accepted as being efficient because they are used elsewhere. Even worse, psychological tools, once adopted, resist evidence from well founded refutation."*

> Levy-Leboyer (1987: 26)

Application-wise our guru needs to ensure that the idea is perceived as possessing a universal relevance. Such a message can be conveyed by claiming that the idea is based on research conducted upon thousands of managers, from all hierarchical levels in all types of organizations. Alternatively, the guru can claim that his consultancy services have been successfully adopted by a wide range of different named companies. In both cases, the implicit message of the universality of the product is conveyed.

3.7   Control

A recurring characteristic of the most popular management ideas is their claim to offer managers increased control over their work environment in general, and over the labour process in particular.   Roberts (1984) argued that:

> *"Managers who cling to the purely technical view of their practice,*
> *look to social science for an 'objective' knowledge which will allow*
> *them ... to get above or outside of their situation and manipulate*
> *others as one might manipulate mere objects."*

Rubin (1986) discussed managers' feelings of powerlessness and their inability to do anything about it. Such feelings of impotence stemmed from events such as having their decisions overturned by senior management without explanation, having to participate in discussions when the other peoples' minds were already made up, being passed over for promotion or a salary increase because of quotas, or working for a boss who did not defend his department from senior management's attacks.   Such concerns were additional to the basic one of having one's performance judged on the work of other people who were often unco-operative and unpredictable.

As managers felt unable to do what they thought was necessary or important, a reaction of anger, powerlessness and frustration developed.   As this increased, so scapegoating occurred. Managers blamed their bosses, Japanese competition, trade unions or employees' lack of commitment. The search for and adoption of particular management ideas and techniques could, in this context, be seen as an attempt to re-assert control over their world of work.

It is perhaps not accidental that the majority of management ideas and their techniques are focused upon controlling the most unpredictable element in the organizational world - people.   The three grand strategies of labour control are mechanization, labour differentiation and education (Anthony, 1986: 33).   The first prescribes tasks, routines, times and specifications, as though by reference to some immutable logic.   Differentiation relates the

organization that follows from that logic to an order of different jobs with different grades, levels of authority and pay. Education teaches the principles upon which the first two are based. Watson (1983: 14) argued that:

"The search for at least a sufficient degree of control explains the recognition of 'the mixed and contradictory motives behind the growth of welfare and personnel management in the U.S.A.' in order to develop more subtle forms of social control than sheer coercion."

One can argue that the more a management idea is perceived by the manager to increase his control, the more attractive it will be to him. Much of the critical writing on management ideas has viewed them at primarily addressing this central problem of how managers should best control labour in work organizations. Commenting on the appeal of Herzberg's (1959) motivation ideas, Mant (1979: 76) wrote that:

"British business, with its long and unlovely history of employee exploitation, fell with enthusiasm, on American versions of 'motivation'- versions which promised the possibility of more ways of getting people to do things for you, together with a place in heaven for your good works. It was irresistible stuff."

There are at least two explanations of managers' need for control. One is socio-psychological and the other is sociological. The socio-psychological explanation was offered by Dixon (1976). He argued that the majority of organizations were bureaucractic and were run by people with an authoritarian approach. He felt that such organizations attracted similarly-minded persons (e.g. from the army). Since the personality fitted, these people were themselves promoted in turn. The authoritarian personality had a preference for power and control. Mant (1979: 78) wrote that after the Second World War, the fight element in the British dependency

culture went into business and industry. War victory, he argued, gave an acceptable model for the present leadership and emphasised the importance of charisma and the "Man of the Moment" notion.

Militaristic terminology pervades all aspects of management. In his survey of keywords in the English speaking culture, Williams (1973) showed that soon after the word "manage" first appeared in the English language (having been taken from the French and Italian), it was quickly extended to operations of war. "To manage arms" was adopted as a synonym for fighting in the sixteenth century. Williams observed that this very early military connotation of the idea of managing is still current.

The language of managerial life is the language of *strategies*, advertising *campaigns*, company *headquarters*, *divisions*, *canteens*, managerial *staffs*, *line* managers, personnel *officers*, *esprit de corps*, and planning *exercises*. The deeper significance of this surface talk is a semi-covert reference to the essential córporate purposiveness of organizations. An army is the clearest case of an organization which survives or dies, wins or loses, on the basis of controlling and co-ordinating its various parts and directing them, as a whole, to achieve certain specific purposes. As tense and somewhat temporary coalitions, organizations and their generals (managers) are involved in a series of ambiguous and often conflicting purposes. At the heart of how managers actually think in an organization is a recognition that management does, in the end, involve pulling along all the various interests and influences in the same specific direction which ensures some kind of success. Any ideas or techniques which can assist in the promotion of this goal are therefore welcomed (Watson, 1986: 40)

Ries and Trout (1986) wrote a book with the title *"Marketing Warfare"*. It explained how (in the words of its publicity copy) managers could use military strategies to out-manoeuvre, outflank and ambush their competition. Warnes (1985) wrote the *"Genghis Khan Guide to Business"*, Ramsey (1987) penned *"The Corporate Warriors"*, while James (1985) was the author of *"Business Wargames"*. This last book was sub-titled *"Business Strategy for Executives in the Trenches of Market Warfare"*. The back cover of the book contained the following comments:

IF YOU DON'T FIGHT, YOU CAN'T WIN

The closest analogy to current market conditions is WAR.

Dien Bien Phu, Verdun, Gallipoli, the Six Day War, the Falklands, the Cuban Missile Crisis ... each has a lesson for anyone in today's market place.   Drawing on the tragic mistakes and brilliant victories of military history, it makes parallels with histories from industry worldwide.

Read Business Wargames, before your company meets its WATERLOO.

The connotations of the military metaphor convey the notion that management is an exclusively masculine activity, the idea of enforced obedience to orders imposed through a hierarchical officer system. That hierarchy consists of "officers" and "men", each drawn from a different social strata with little movement upwards beyond a certain level.

The second explanation for the manager's need for control is a sociological one put forward by Braverman (1974).   Using military terms himself, he argued that organizations were one theatre of war in the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeois. Managers, acting on behalf of shareholders were caught in the middle and constituted the first line of battle in dealing with a recalcitrant workforce which was ready to subvert their aims and schemes. Managers sought to control and cajole the workers and make their behaviour predictable.   The problem was that managers were human as well, and had feelings about and a need to subjugate and control others. Thus, argued Braverman, managers questioned their self-image and legitimacy:

"The design of work within capitalism is seen to take a number of forms: bureaucracy, classical, scientific management, human relations and others.   But always the underlying priorities are the same: the achievement of profit, and the relativity of control.

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Within capitalism, those who own work organizations are faced with two major problems: the need to be and remain profitable ...secondly ... the problem of employee recalcitrance and resistance."

Braverman (1974)

Taking a lead from these writings, our guru needs to present his idea as offering a significant contribution to the "fire power" available to the manager in the "war" for competitive advantage and profit. More "bangs to the buck" in military parlance. There is no reason to believe that in the short term, the authoritarian nature of managers, or the bureaucratic form of organizations will decline. Although changes are on the way, it is likely to be "business as usual" for the next few years.

3.8   Communicability

The guru must adapt his communication to deal with managers and their problems. Five aspects are particularly relevant here. First, managers have to deal with an increasing complex world. Second, they do not understand excessively technical language. Third, they have a short span of attention. Fourth they have a limited span of memory. Fifth, they are convinced by certain modes of communication. In communicating the essence of their idea, the acronym KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid) is a good guide for our guru. Let us consider each of these five communication limitations and their implications for the guru's mode of communication.

Complex world

As the world becomes more complex, managers cope with complexity by simplifying things. Argyris (1972) drew upon the work of Bruner (1971) and Simon (1969) to argue that man's ability to think and process information was influenced by the way in which his brain worked. The key characteristics of information processing that he highlighted were the

basically serial mode of operation (the processing only a few symbols at a time); its finite nature; and the fact that the symbols being processed are changed in limited memory structures whose content can be rapidly changed (Simon 1969). In contrast, the environment in which man operated was complex. What then should the guru do?

Argyris wrote that as one observed managers making decisions, one gained the impression that they carried an array of models in their memories to deal with the stress of information overload. Handy (1976) identified three mechanisms to handle such stress. These were **specialization** (allowing only some information to penetrate); **isolation** (the blocking of access to information); and **simplification** (the use of mottoes, rules-of-thumb and heuristics). Sir Robin Nicholson, a retired chief scientific advisor to the Cabinet, said that people expected simple answers even if the problems were tortuous. When Fritz Kahn was reproached for an inaccuracy in his presentation of the atom, he replied *"It may be wrong, but it's understandable"* (Lanners, 1976: 107). It may be that managers prefer incorrect, understandable ideas to correct, incomprehensible ones. Anthony wrote about the problem of:

> *"... unreliable theories [which] have been vulgarised by consultants and then simplified by teachers in order to transmit them to managers whose knowledge of basic behavioural science may be nil".*

> Anthony (1977: 262)

Language

Managers may not understand the idea and hence cannot apply it. Argyris (1972:91) noted that the usability of knowledge was partly a function of its semantic clarity. In the sixties, Woodward (1965: 232-3, 252) wrote:

"From a manager's point of view, much of what is written is difficult to read ... There is also the problem of jargon ... Moreover, a lot of recent writing is at a high level of abstraction ... Many full time students of management ... find much of the literature difficult to assimilate, and for the practical manager at the end of a day's work, with limited time or inclination, the task is well nigh impossible. There is an urgent need for clarity and simplicity in what is being said or written".

Some years later, Abrams (1981: 114-5), a company training mvanager, complained that:

"... the basic difficulty of management development specialists is our inability to communicate our own learning and experience to the manager ... If these things can't be communicated to management in a language they not only understand but with which they are comfortable, we are deluding ourselves with psychobabble."

"Psychobabble" was a concept defined and coined by Rosen (1978). He used it to refer to a form of language, the meaning of which was so elusive and subject to ad hoc definitions, that it came to represent neither a theory nor understanding, but a <u>style</u> of speech.

Our guru therefore should seek to attain clarity of communication, while at the same time avoiding obviousness. Watson (1980) argued that while many managers looked to social scientists for simple prescriptions, panaceas and formulae, for these scientists to offer these in simple straightforward terms would raise suspicion. For this reason "magic words" tended to be used which required the manager to use a little (although not a great deal) of effort to "unwrap" the idea-parcel. This process of unpacking encouraged the manager to feel that he had achieved something of significance. It gave him a feeling of participation and ownership.

Hence, a degree of mystification is in order, by means of either acronyms or re-labelling. Acronyms have increased in circulation in management and have generally gained popularity in the twentieth century (MBO, SWOT, JIT, TQM, LBO, SPC, MBWA). They give a pseudo-scientific precision to commonplace observations and make them appear at once sociologically profound and wittingly dismissive. In a similar way, the re-naming of complex processes and concepts makes them more widely available for general consumption. Transactional Analysis (TA) developed by Berne (1964) provides an excellent example. Berne converted psycho-analytical techniques into an expedient therapy with the help of a new terminology. One of TA's appealing features is the opportunity it offered to its users to play around with a new and fanciful vocabulary.

Much of TA's success has been attributed by observers to this easy-to-understand (but not immediately obvious) terminology that manages to capture enough Freudian theory in one hand and straightforward positivism on the other, and thereby endears it to a wide range of people. As for TA theory, there is nothing in it that cannot be found in Freud, Adler, Sullivan or drama therapy. It has been suggested by psychiatrists that Transactional Analysis is essentially a language. In developing it, Berne produced neologisms and catch-phrases. TA bulges with lists and words taken from the dictionary of modern culture, all employed in the service of a theory. TA has, say some critics, a manic habit of naming everything - *stroking, sweatshirts, trading stamps, cold fuzzies* and so on.

Finally, a guru should remember that writing a book may not be the most effective communication vehicle for his idea. A book's prime function is to publicly establish the writer as a subject expert. Other communication devices, public seminars, videos, audio-cassettes, may be more effective devices for communicating with managers.

Span of attention

Span of attention which refers to the length of time for which the recipient of information can pay attention. This span is of most concern to the media. Garner (1989) wrote about the "Three Minute Culture". She reported that

three minutes was on average the amount of time an American viewer watched a TV programme before switching channels; the length of a pop single; a little longer than a commercial break and much longer than most news items. She speculated that as the volume of information available to us increases, only a mind that worked in three minute bleeps with be able to deal with it.

We know a great deal about the process of communication. For example, that managers are not good at processing large streams of data; are bad at causality; prefer to trust their gut feelings to hard evidence; deal with complexity by simplifying things; expect simple solutions to complex problems; possess a limited attention span and memory capability; and have difficulty in understanding unfamiliar words. How can gurus deal with these particular problems?

The answer seems to be to produce simple and direct messages which can act as mottoes for action; simplify them by reducing their complexity; re-name tricky concepts; communicate their ideas directly to managers by conference speaking; and use cases and stories as communication vehicles to spread their thoughts. Jan Carlzon (1987: 89), President of SAS wrote that:

> *"The most powerful messages are those that are simple and direct*
> *and can serve as a battle cry for people at all organizational levels.*
> *The message does not need to be lofty or even original."*

Perhaps the test of a popular idea is the guru's ability to summarize it in an aphorism, precept or epigram. Some examples taken from recent popular management ideas are shown below:

> *"Quality is free".*
> *"The manager's most scare resource is time".*
> *"Effective managers do the right things instead of just doing*
> *things right".*
> *"You only have one chance to make a first impression".*

Eilon (1985) wrote that management writers offered a range of theories, hypotheses, paradigms and gestalts. These generalizations often took the form of pithy statements which became quotable aphorisms. Eilon claimed that the attraction of these lay in their conciseness and the way in which they managed to encapsulate complicated ideas in memorable and elegant epigrams for readers to think about. Even Peters and Waterman admitted that each of their findings was a platitude (1982: xv). Reviewing the literature on management over the past sixty years, Eilon found that the most successful sayings were witty and simple. In this, our guru can be guided by Ries and Trout's (1986: 7-8) recommendation that:

> "The best approach to take in our overcommunicated society is the oversimplified message. In communication, as in architecture, less is more. You have to sharpen your message to cut into your mind. You have to jettison the ambiguities, simplify the message and then simplify it some more if you want to make a long lasting impression."

Span of memory

Miller (1956; 1967) identified a number of constraints on human information processing. He referred to the **span of immediate memory**, which for many different test materials appeared to be about seven items. He also discussed the **span of absolute judgement** that could distinguish up to seven categories. The first of these imposed severe limitations on the amount of information that humans were able to receive, process and remember. The information thus needed to be organized simultaneously into several dimensions, sequences of units or chunks. Attention also needed to be paid to re-coding which was the taking of different input events, grouping them, applying a new name to the group, and then remembering the new name rather than the original input events. Peters and Waterman (1982: 24) explained that they:

"... identified twenty-two attributes of excellence. The whole thing was just too confusing and we were in danger of adding to the complexity ... we went back to work, and tried to distil the essence of what we were saying in a simpler way. The result, with no material loss to the message, are the eight attributes of excellence we describe."

The way in which man deals with such complexity, said Argyris, was to create concepts, hierarchies of concepts and heuristic strategies. Thus, in presenting a management idea such as a theory, the number of variables and relationships to be considered must be adequate to comprehend the complexity of the problem, but cannot go beyond the information-processing capacity of the individual manager.

Preferred communication modes

How do different communication formats influence managers? People do not live by pie-charts alone, or indeed by bar-graphs or three inch statistical appendices to 300 page reports. People live, reason and are moved by symbols and stories. Much was written about President Reagan's talent as a story-teller. Even his most stalwart supporters often blushed at the gap between statistical reality and this chosen story. Researchers attest to the power of stories.

A study was conducted involving MBAs (individuals more likely than almost anyone else to profess devotion to pie-charts) by Stanford University researcher, Joanne Martin (see Peters, 1988: 418). She attempted to convince a number of MBA students of the sincerity of a firm's policy of avoiding lay-offs. She divided them into separate groups. The first group was presented with an illustrative story; another received a wealth of statistical information indicating the firm had far less involuntary turnover than normal for the industry. A third group received both the story and the statistics. A fourth group was given an executive's statement about the firm's policy.

Surveying the different individuals, the group that was most convinced was the "story only" one. It was even more convinced than the "story and statistics" group.

Yorks and Whitsett (1983) commented on the attractiveness to managers of the case study or case history. For the managers seeking an answer to what exactly they should do, the case literature provides them with ready answers. It generates in the reading manager a vicarious experience through which he is able to internalize the results of the research project. Field research reports show him concrete demonstrations of the feasibility of the proposed principles. The transfer of knowledge to the real world application is seemingly established within a setting with which the reader can identify. The field report study invites oversimplification, both by the nature of its data and by the "believability" of its tone. Writing about personnel management, Legge (1978) warned that "... *not only does much of the reputed 'best practice' rest on 'special case' models, but it also tends to ignore the constraints arising from the political realities of organizational behaviour that circumscribe any manager's freedom to pursue a given course of action.*"

Eilon (1985: 75) claimed that, *"Nothing is calculated to impress students and managers of the managerial scene more than a simple story with a moral attached to it."* It was both a flexible and convenient mode of communication. Eilon contrasted the way that such fables captivated a management audience, with the way in which model-building, philosophizing or theorizing left them cold. The most successful books of recent years, "In Search of Excellence" and "Iaccoca: An Autobiography" both use case example after case example, as well as quotations. Crosby, in his book, "Quality is Free", devotes the second half of his book to the story of, "The HDA Corporation Quality Improvement Programme". Blanchard and Johnson's hugely successful "One Minute Manager" was written in the form of a short story and contains generous dialogue.

A common saying is that, *"If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a story is worth a thousand research statistics."* In pre-literate societies, wisdom and knowledge were transferred through stories, anecdotes and parables. In societies where action (hunting, killing) rather than reflection pre-dominated, this was the dominant mode of communication. This suggests that "action

people" such as managers are responsive to stories as vehicles through which to receive knowledge. Such a mode is preferred to reading and reflection, and may even be preferred to learning from experience. Managers listen to stories, consider them either interesting or not, and take their point.

Scheler (1970) went further and asserted that there was a fixed structure of human knowledge which extended to all spheres of human action. In that form, it constituted a "constant" of the human mind. He developed a typology of world views ordered in terms of artificiality:

Least artificial

1.   Myth and legend
2.   Natural folk-language
3.   Religious knowledge
4.   Mystic knowledge
5.   Philosophic-metaphysical knowledge
6.   Positive knowledge of mathematics
      and the natural world
7.   Technical knowledge
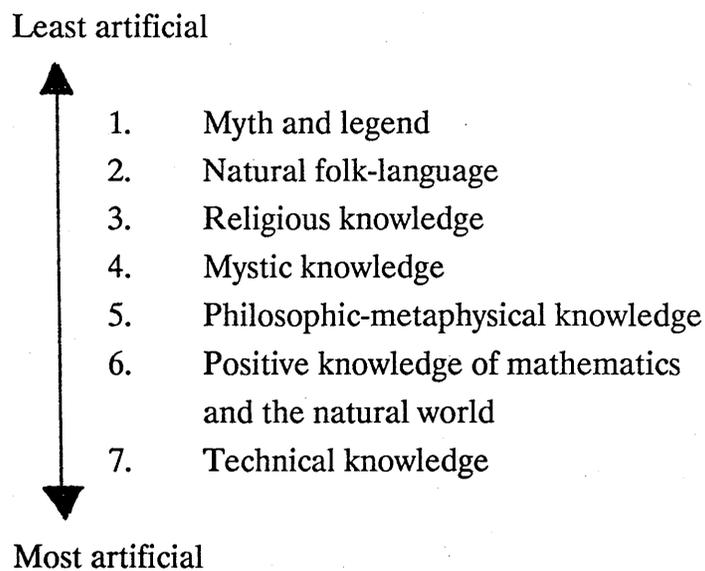
Most artificial

Scheler implied that being perceived as least artificial, the myths and legends were less open to social change than technical knowledge, and were therefore experienced as more appealing. Agor (1976) described the part played by intuition in decision-making. Tversky and Kahneman (1974) identified a phenomenon called "representativeness" which they said strongly affected our reasoning powers. In their view, people were more influenced by stories (vignettes that were whole and made sense in themselves) than by data (which, by definition, was utterly abstract). The consequences of representativeness were that:

1.   We did not pay attention to prior outcomes. History
      did not move us as much as a good current anecdote.

2. We were hopeless about sample size finding small
    samples about as convincing as large samples, some
    times more.

3. If two events vaguely co-existed, we leapt to
    conclusions about causality.

4. People reasoned with simple decision rules.   In a
    complex world they placed emphasis on gut-feeling.

*"Let's be clear on how we operate, Grimstead. I make the
decisions and you rationalize them."*

The implications for our guru of this research are clear. Do not worry about causality, managers don't. Limit the number of your idea variables or dimensions. Do not worry about offering simple solutions. Being wrong is not a problem. It does no harm to wrap up your ideas in acronyms or re-label to give them a spurious legitimacy and the opportunity for managers to "unwrap" them. "Chunk" your information by pre-coding it. Communicate through stories, cases and anecdotes rather than statistical analyses or reports.

3.9   Unitary perspective

A unitary perspective is one which holds that workers and management share common interests and goals. Anthony (1977: 261) argued that:

> "A great deal of management education, that part of it concerned with behavioural science, is in fact, theocratic , it is designed to establish a sense of unity of purpose and of values by providing managers with a common language and a system of concepts. Management education is truly ideological in this sense, that it aims to influence behaviour by inculcating beliefs and expectations."

<div align="right">Anthony (1977: 261)</div>

Butler (1986: xvii) felt that it was one of the ironies of life that it should have been American writers who claimed that the firm was properly a unitary institution. The presumption that the firm should and could act in this way was used by the human relations writers and many others, to justify the assumption that the employee would identify with the organizational goal. The different management writers (Taylor, Mayo) shared the same concern for creating the myth of unity whose true effect was to tacitly deny pluralism within the firm because they denied the need (and with it the right) of the employee to hold a different view from that of management. Managers

persist in the belief in their authority over the shopfloor because to them it is an evident reality in terms of their own intra-managerial relationships. However:

> *"The extent to which management is at pains to press or persuade its subordinate employees into a sense of committed membership suggests that there is a perceived problem of differentiated affiliation."*

> Anthony (1986: 191)

Management ideas which stress unitary views act to reinforce management's own preferred vision and offer tools with which to convey that vision to subordinates. Citing the OD techniques based upon neo-human relations ideas, Stephenson (1985: 253) argued that:

> *"Underlying the OD position there is an acceptance of a unitary view of organizations and a rejection of a pluralist view."*

He believed that OD viewed the natural state of an organization as one in which conflict occurred only accidentally and then out of a failure of communications, a lack of understanding, or a clash of personalities. From this perspective, conflict was not held to arise out of any genuine or fundamental differences of interests amongst those within the organization. Taking the same point further, Honour and Mainwaring (1982: 90) wrote that OD was a technique which was *"... specifically aimed at engineering consensus"* though in the guise of what Schein had called, 'an adaptive coping cycle', and what Beckhard termed the "healthy organization". The corollary of this perspective was that any disruption of this smoothly operating unitary system was deemed to be unhealthy and undesirable.

Butler (1986) too stressed the continuing obsession of "togetherness" in American management thought. He argued that their attitude to capitalism had developed into a form of social schizophrenia. The social ambiguities of capitalism led them to make the boundary of the company the point at which employee behaviour was switched. Being attacked by unconstrained market forces, there was nowhere for the individual to shelter from the blast of competition other than <u>inside</u> of the corporation. Only here was a place left for human warmth. From Mayo's time right up to and including modern guru theory, popular management ideas cast the organization in the role of the family. Hence the most popular management ideas have generally been as pre-occupied with internal co-operation as with external competitiveness. Such a separation is logically non-sensical when, for example, the external pressures of competition result in company redundancies. Nevertheless, argued Butler, the unconvincing myth continues to persist that competition outside of the company boundary is commendable but that competition inside of it is reprehensible. Inside "togetherness" is the theme.

Let us consider some of the successful and established unity-stressing techniques. Management-by-Objectives (MbO) is underpinned by the notion that organizations are co-operative teams organized to achieve common goals. Similarly, staff appraisal programmes focus upon individual strengths and weaknesses even though work performance is widely known to be a social phenomenon and not just a psychological one. Appraisals tend to overlook the social determinants and contexts of members' actions assuming a co-operative and mutually supporting organization mileu in which individual motivation and performance make the key difference.

Techniques based on management ideas containing unitary notions have continued to be popular despite repeated failures following implementation. Why should this be so? Sofer and Tuchman's tentative answer was that:

> "... doubts are overridden by the anxiety of those responsible for
> large technological resources to keep under close control the
> persons who handle them. In other words, a covert or latent

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purpose may be served by reassuring senior managers, shareholders and government that rationality is being exercised, or at any rate pursued, in the use of human as well as physical capital."

Sofer and Tuchman (1970: 389-90)

The management literature refuses to mention that the worker-manager relationship is conditioned by the ever present threat to the employee's livelihood of impersonal market forces.   Butler (1986: 11) commented that:

"Under capitalism, one group of people, senior management, attempts to engage in a co-operative enterprise with two other groups, subordinate managers and workers.   However, senior management's commitment must, of necessity be limited, because it has the long term viability of the enterprise at heart.   This prevents it identifying too strongly with the collective or individual welfare of employees.   The paradox is that the prosperity of the firm   demands that senior management engage the hearts and minds of employees in order to further the goals of the company. These goals must be achieved in the face of any adverse social effects suffered by the workforce as a consequence of introducing the most economic means of production.   Such an incongruity is demonstrated in the management of a firm asking for the commitment and loyalty of a workforce that remains after a major redundancy programme."

Butler concluded that the nonsense of claiming that the firm could and should be an oasis of co-operation in a competitive environment should be recognised.   Why American and British business schools and the popular management ideas should have so readily adopted the myth of unity of purpose in the face of all the evidence and a priori reasons to the contrary is a matter for consideration.

At the heart of the myth is the belief that management and workers will share the same goals freely because there are no basic differences that could cause conflict providing that management fully communicates its point of view. Second, there is the view that "all people of goodwill will naturally agree on the same things". Butler saw this myth of the unity of individual and organizational goals as one which ran through much, if not all, of popular management ideas. The unanimity of the writers concerning this fallacy suggested to Butler that either collectively or individually, all the writers had taken a conscious decision to accept a fallacious concept believing that the intellectual dishonesty involved was justified, and that the telling of this white lie overall, did more good than harm. Alternatively, Butler proposed that it might be a common cultural heritage of these different writers which promoted this assumption of unity of purposes and bound them to this fallacy.

Butler (1986: 68) went on to consider the existence of some strong taboo which made any criticism of this fallacy appear improper. To breach the taboo would impede the ability to propose ways of motivating employees since motivation in management literature involved encouraging employees to work towards the goals of the employer. He wrote that:

> "The vast majority of American theorists are united in the fallacy that there is no reason why the employers and employees of well managed companies should not be in perfect accord. To acknowledge any mismatch would threaten the Weltanschaung ("highly personalised way of seeing things") of such writers."

Anthony (1977) noted that British attempts at achieving worker co-operation were rarely based the capitalist ideological framework. Instead, the emphasis was on managerial exhortations to "work hard" or consistently, often mixed with other references to the need for a patriotic response to the current economic ills. British management's appeals stressed three acceptable acceptable features. First, that the idea that an organization consisted of two opposing sides was rejected. Second, the assertion that

managers were virtually indistinguishable from employees ("we are all workers now") reflected in harmonization policies in which managers clocked-in. Third, a stress on the common interests involved in any employment situation. These observations offer gurus some more insights as to how to present their ideas. Quite simply, they have to stress the unitary nature of organizational life. The associated techniques need to echo this perspective.

3.10   Authorization

Authorization refers to the basis of belief in the management idea and its associated techniques. It answers the question for the manager, "How do I know that it is true and will work?". It also provides the basis for his defence should the adopted technique fail or be shown to be suspect. Historically, the popular management ideas have been authorized upon one or more of three bases. These are commonsense, scientific research and adoption by others. The power of these is cumulative in that the more bases the guru can appeal to, the more attractive his idea will become to managers.

Commonsense

Blackler and Shimmin (1984: 8) commented on the difficulty of getting managers to base their decisions on knowledge that run counter to 'common sense', 'natural' assumptions or short term expediency. Butler (1986: 15) referred to the observable tendency of "practical" men and women in industry to reject the theoretical. The effect of this is that words like "theoretical" and "academic" developed derogatory connotations. Watson further felt that it encouraged, "... *practical people to celebrate their own supposed being-in-touch-with-reality by scorning the theorists whom they see as being afraid to "dirty-their-hands" or to "get-their-feet-wet"."* This celebration of hard-headed, atheoretical practicality, argued Watson, reflected the abstraction, opaqueness and even silliness of much of the theory that was on offer. However, it also acted as a defence mechanism which functioned as a two-finger salute to those who stayed away from the coal face.

Managers' preferred processes of knowledge acquisition supported this view. Woodward (1965) commented on the way in which they stressed learning from experience in preference to learning from formal courses of instruction. Hall (1985) listed the beliefs he felt underlay much of management learning. These were that management was best learned by doing the job and working within the team; that learning could not be transferred easily to the workplace; that the quality of learning was not related to long hours spent in syndicate rooms; and that programmes should develop the natural, intuitive, entrepreneurial feel which the orderly scientific approach inhibited. Salaman and Butler (1990) made similar points about managers' approaches to learning.

The corollary of these managerial preferences was that those ideas which appealed to the intuitive, commonsense of the manager had the greatest chance of becoming popular. Considering some of the new management ideas and techniques of the 1970s, Lupton (1976) wrote that job enrichment had a "plausible ring" amongst managers. Many years later, Peters and Waterman (1982: xv) wrote:

"... the eight basics of management excellence don't just 'work because they work'. They work because they make excellent sense."

" ... [it] disgorged no magic. The absence of magic - practical commonsense - turned out to be its biggest selling point."

Peters and Austin (1985: 40)

Commonsense is therefore an important basis of appeal. As discussed in the previous chapter, the figure-ground switch of currently perceived elements in the manager's work environment seems to result in a positive (and non-threatening) assessment by him of the idea as commonsensical. A management idea which can take this form is also perceived to challenge his way of seeing and doing things. Objectively, what one has here is

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contradiction. The idea is perceived to be simultaneously commonsensical and challenging. Yet the investigations reveal that such contradiction is neither acknowledged nor experienced as problematic by managers. Indeed, such a unique contradictory position may hold the key to understanding what makes a popular management idea such a rarity.

Levy-Leboyer (1987) suggested that scientific refutation did not determine the popularity of a management idea. Instead it was its acceptability which was the determining factor. With so many different ideas around, managers were attracted, first by those which were new, and second, by those which possessed an intuitive, commonsensical appeal or face validity. Other studies have shown that management ideas and the techniques based upon them, would be resisted by managers if they appeared to be critical of what managers had done; did not agree with managers' expectations, values or experiences (Carter, 1971; Caplan, 1977); or worst of all, if they actively threatened managers' "stability of cherished beliefs and world views" (Zusman, 1976).

This same phenomenon was observed even amongst those who commissioned empirical research. Weiss and Bucuvalas (1980) discovered that decision-makers resisted research results that were incompatible with their own beliefs. They labelled such work "counter-intuitive research". The more the findings of any research conformed to the manager's expectations, the less important the quality of the research was deemed to be. Conversely, the more the results departed from user-expectations (and yielded counter-intuitive results), the more research quality came to be seen as important before managers were prepared to pay attention. Weiss and Bucuvalas' conclusions support the proposition that an idea or technique is considered useful when it is compatible with the individual managers' knowledge and values.

Managers will tend to resist the introduction of new concepts which threaten to invalidate their existing frames of reference. Our existing picture of the world provides us with a sense of security. It allows us to make things "hang together in some sort of sense". We each cherish our own cognition, ideology or "Weltanschauung". When a bit of data comes along that does

not fit, it calls into question our whole cognition. Thus, we each check our knowledge against our existing cognition before deciding whether to accept it or not.

Students and managers alike will not accept information that causes them a great deal of trauma to make it "fit". However, Brickman (1980) proposed that discoveries (new ideas) emerged from a region in which we disbelieve them, to a zone where we find them interesting, to a zone in which we find them obvious, and then finally, into a further region in which we become oblivious to them. Initially threatening ideas could thus become commonsense.

The key point for aspiring gurus is that they should not try to sell any ideas which, given where the audience stands, are too outlandish for them to accept (Davis, 1971). Trout and Ries (1986: 32) felt that the mind had no room for the new and different unless it was related to the old. For this reason, they recommended that if one had a new idea or product, then it was better to tell the customer what it was not rather than what it was (horseless carriage, unleaded petrol). Butler (1987) hypothesised three possible responses when a person checked a piece of information against their existing knowledge or bank of commonsense. These are shown in Table 10.2.

Behling criticised Miner's (1980) book on organizational behaviour theories for omitting a consideration of the *acceptance* of the different ideas as a criterion for assessing their importance. Miner only used scientific rigour and potential application as measures and Behling (1983: 158) noted that:

> *"The actual impact of a theory may stem more from its ability to mesh with the values of an era and from its emotional appeal than from its scientific merit or specific prescriptions for managers."*

Table 10.2: Human responses to new information (Butler, 1987: 97)

1.	already ---> known	redundant information	---->	no learning takes place
2.	too ---> radical	reject it - usually finding some reason for discrediting the information in order to defend existing view of world in the face of attack	--->	no learning takes place
3.	new but involves only a limited re-arrangement of world	------------------>		learning takes place

Scientific enquiry

Buchanan (1985:6) explained that managers in Britain seemed to prefer commonsense, practical ideas to more sophisticated and complex techniques, especially those based on scientific social science research. In fact, he felt that the latter were regarded with suspicion and scepticism. Heller and Warner (1984) noted that both managers and the media were reluctant to take research findings seriously and instead tended to give prominence to "pseudo research " and to the opinions of individual managers.

The earliest ideas which claimed a scientific base of independence could counter possible charges of manipulation. The managers who used them could argue that their guiding ideas were independent. More recently, especially in the United States, the reference base of research reports has become a selling point to be highlighted in the promotional literature of training packages. In Britain, in contrast, the appeal of the commonsense - intuitive approach has exceeded that of research validity. Guion (1975: 20) wrote that the manager:

"... lacks the time and resources to develop and evaluate a theory of his own and the patience to master the intricacies of a fully elaborated theory developed by others. So he falls back on simple theories obtained from consultants, hucksters or colleagues."

He went on to argue that managers rarely assessed the validity of a management idea on the basis of statistical or even empirical evidence. Using Herzberg as an example, Guion claimed that the motivation-hygiene theory:

"... when properly packaged and sold, was important to managers. They could swallow it hook, line and sinker without evaluating the research - or reject it without similar concern for data - solely on the basis of its intuitive appeal or attitude towards its principle author."

Thomas (1989) considered how commonsense and science linked up. He illustrated this with the case of "The One Minute Manager" book (Blanchard and Johnson, 1983). Here, the authorization of the proposed techniques was achieved within the story itself by the "convincing" explanations given by the One Minute Manager to the acolyte's questions. Rather like Watson to Holmes, the young man simply "saw" that it was true and made sense. Outside of the story, noted Thomas, authorization took the form of the prominent display of the authors' qualifications (PhD and MD), consumer

endorsements, two pages of description of the authors' backgrounds, and a list of acknowledgements listing thirteen names, ten of which are prefixed with the title "Dr".

The absence of a list of references was consistent with the story mode which presented the content as, "a compilation of what many wise people have taught us and what we have learned ourselves". Thomas felt that the story mode relieved the authors from any obligation to provide a rigorous justification of the procedures that they advocated. It is significant that the books of Edward de Bono, the propounder of Lateral Thinking, similarly do not contains any references.

Finally, one can note Thomas' observation that The One Minute Manager portrays management knowledge as consisting of a small number of behavioural techniques which are not easily recognised (hence their status as "secrets to be discovered"). However, once they are revealed, they prove to be simple and sheer commonsense. It is their very simplicity which gives The One Minute Manager idea its experiential validity, and it is this which authorises TOMM knowledge.

Gellner (1985:40) noted that a totally unproblematic idea was not in fact, an advantage in producing a burning faith. He argued that although popular belief systems needed to be anchored in the "obvious" intellectual climate, they could not consist entirely of obvious, uncontentious elements. An idea or a concept without an element of conflict was not an idea at all in the eyes of Trout and Ries (1986: 190) but "... *a motherhood, apple and the flag revisited.*" Thus ideas which had a cogency, obviousness, acceptability could not be used as marks which distinguished a school of thought. Truths which were demonstrable or obvious did not fulfil the task of distinguishing the "believers" from the rest. Only a difficult belief could do that. Gellner (1985: 41) wrote that the belief or idea must contain an element of both menace and risk:

"The belief [idea] must present itself in such a way that the person encountering, weighing the claim that is being made on him, can neither ignore it nor hedge his bets. His situation is such that encountering the claim, he cannot but make a decision, and it will be weighty one, whichever way he decides."

Oliver's (1990) vivid account of Eli Goldratt's seminar on J-I-T cited earlier, supports this contention.

Adoption by others

Finally, gurus should note that an idea can gain authority by virtue of being adopted by a well-known company. When management ideas are transformed into products such as consumable management techniques, training materials or system-wide interventions, their purveyors' catalogues all regularly include lists of users. The presence of names such as IBM, ICI and BP does three things. First it confirms that the manager is in good company if he adopts the technique. It allows him to identify his organization with these successful ones. Second, it reassures him that the technique has been examined by someone in those companies who has committed himself to it. Third, it provides a defence in the case of failure showing that his decision, in the circumstances, was reasonable, even if it was ultimately proved to be wrong.

As far as authorization of one's idea is concerned, the guidance for the guru is clear. If possible, the idea should be founded upon a scientific base, at least to the extent of being able to claim that "research shows ..." The idea itself should not be incompatible with the manager's broad belief system, but neither should it be so exactly in tune with it that it is rejected as being obvious or irrelevant. Instead, it should involve a re-arrangement of the elements in the manager's world while leaving it broadly familiar. Nevertheless, it should involve an element of risk, opportunity or menace. Again, this difficult balancing act may be responsible for the very small number of truly popular management ideas. The authority of the science and

commonsense is complemented by the credibility given by high status customers. The guru needs to successfully sell his idea to well-respected, opinion-leading companies and incorporate this into his subsequent advertising.

3.11 Legitimation

The importance of legitimation for the guru comes in two forms. The first is now less important than it once was and refers to the manager's role. The second relates to confirming a manager's ideas, and is probably of greater significance today. Let us consider these in turn. As far as the legitimacy of the management role is concerned, Butler (1986: 6) argued that all organizational and management ideas have stemmed from a single deep and intractable problem that they have had to address. This problem had both a moral and a practical dimension :

> *"What right does one section of society, A, have to use the means*
> *that it has to seek the goals that it does ? In particular, what right*
> *does it have to induce other sections of society to become part of*
> *that means and also to expect those sections to refrain from such*
> *actions as A considers a hindrance to its goal achievement ?"*

The legitimating function of management ideas in Child et al.'s (1983) view was directed at securing social recognition and approval for management authority and the way in which it was exercised. In their different ways, each of the popular management ideas acted to legitimate the management's role in some way, and underwrote the "right to manage". The theme of legitimation has been developed by numerous writers. The popular management ideas identified all adopted the "conventional managerial" perspective (Lee and Lawrence, 1985; Lee and Piper, 1986; Butler, 1986). This viewed organizations as being goal-directed and managers as having the right to impose those goals.

Gower and Legge (1983) argued that the language of objectives, plans, rational decision-making, getting things done, and above all, of "plain speaking" which was so often espoused by managers, was in fact all part of the rhetoric which served to maintain management, not simply as a technical order, but also as a moral one. The "sacred right to manage" was sustained by hierarchy which was the taken-for-granted order implicit in the language of accountability and responsibility. Gower and Legge wrote about the rhetoric of bureaucratic control by which they meant the use of a form of word delivery which was lavish in its symbolism and, as such, involved several layers or textures of meaning. This highly expressive language constructed and legitimated managerial prerogatives in terms of a rational, goal-directed images of organizational effectiveness.

Such points can usefully be kept in mind by gurus in terms of the content and presentation of their ideas. The nagging problem of the legitimacy of, and need for the management role, especially in a period of organizational down-sizing remains. Thus, ideas which stress the legitimacy and indispensability of that role, (linked perhaps to the notion of leadership) are likely to receive a good reception. Overall however, as the twentieth century comes to an end, the need for management, for the most part, is accepted. Unlike at the start of the century, it is its size, nature and function that are currently in dispute.

A second and separate dimension of legitimation is the notion that the management idea could have been the manager's own. This is to say that the idea is so close to the manager's own experience that it is not beyond the realms of possibility, *he* could (and perhaps did) think of it himself! The ideas of the well-known writers thus confirm his own views and thereby legitimate them. In such circumstances, the manager has a sort of vicarious ownership of the idea. This is related to the attribute of commonsense which was described earlier. Sharpe(1984) reported his impressions of attending a John Fenton Sales Seminar. Mr Fenton, somewhat like Billy Graham, is able to fill large auditoria with salesmen and motivate and inspire them to future successes. After watching one such performance in order to analyse the elements of its success, Sharpe observed that:

"I got the impression that the response to the roadshow was something like - 'there but for a bit of thought go I'. All the anecdotes and ripostes were close enough to reality for us to believe that we might have thought of that trick, that response or that line ourselves - at least on a good day."

Sharpe (1984: 15)

Other evidence supports this argument. Peters and Waterman made the observation that *"... seasoned audiences are heartened that the 'magic' of P & G and IBM is simply getting the basics right, not possessing more IQ points per man or woman."* (Peters and Waterman, 1982: 17). This quotation stresses two points. "Getting the basics right" refers to doing the commonsense things that all of us should do (and normally do) but occasionally forget. A little later in their book, Peters and Waterman comment that, *"The answer is surprisingly simple, albeit ignored by most managers"* (Peters and Waterman, 1982: 56). The second part of the quotation, which refers to IQ, suggests that all the managers reading the book are capable of doing these things. They do not require any special abilities to do it. Interestingly, A.A. Milne (1926: 202), the author of Winnie-the-Pooh, and himself a detective novelist, described what he felt were the characteristics of a good detective story:

" ... the detective must have no more special knowledge than the average reader. The reader must be made to feel that, if he too had used the light of cool deductive reasoning and the stern logic of remorseless facts (as, Heaven bless us, we are quite capable of doing) then he too would have fixed the guilt."

Perhaps there is some aspect of human involvement that transcends management idea appeal, and is in some way universal.

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3.12   Contribution-ownership potential

Different writers have commented on the importance of involving the consumers of management techniques in their application. The involvement of the manager increases his feeling of commitment to it and thereby contributes to its popularity.   This is only one instance of a general phenomenon which has been called "consumer manufacture". It has been argued that in the economy of the future, the end of the manufacturing chain for goods and services would be occupied by consumers in their own physical space. For example, the Polaroid photograph, electronic home banking (where customers access their own accounts and pay bills and withdraw cash) and the adding of carbonated water to soft drink concentrates. D-I-Y has always been the prime example of this:

> *"MFI is a company built on the major innovation, the concept of flat pack furniture. The appeal of the concept is much more subtle than it appears at first sight. A great deal rests on the suppressed desire of most men to be seen as 'good with their hands'. Flat pack furniture allows them to wrestle with building kitchen cabinets or fitted wardrobes with a reasonable certainty of getting it right and ending up with a professional-appearing job. Hunt compares it with the experience of Green's cake mix which failed to sell well when all the housewife had to do was to add water, but took off dramatically as soon as the company changed the ingredients to require her to crack an egg into the mixture".*

> Goldsmith and Clutterbuck (1985: 107)

Shifting the determination of the product's final configuration downstream into the consumer's space has a number of consequences. When it is the consumer who creates and controls manufacture, then he may consume more. Manufacturers should seek out ways to move end-of-production downstream into the space of the consumer since this would result in renewed product growth. The same principles can apply to management

ideas and techniques. If the final version of the idea can be "manufactured" in the manager's head, then it will be mentally retained and applied. In addition, if the idea's associated technique (be it a quality circle or corporate culture programme) can be assembled on the premises, then it too will be used more widely. Argyris (1972) commented on the:

"... preference for the less rigorously tested generalizations that it apparently provided executives with the knowledge that they needed to get on with creating their own self-fulfilling prophecies. The more they used generalizations that spelt out rigorously the empirical relationships among variables, the less they felt they that they would attribute success to their efforts; the less therefore, the possibilities of psychological success, and thus the less the feeling of competence."

Argyris argued that managers expected social generalizations to be inadequate and perhaps preferred decision-making processes where they designed the sequence of steps, elicited corrective feedback and defined the relationship between variables so as to create a self-fulfilling prophesy. If a variable was shown by research to account for 10% of non-random variance, the manager may wish to structure the world to make the same variable (under the same conditions) account for 80% of the non-random variance. He wrote that:

"... scientifically rigorous generalizations systematically explaining the world could deprive the users of those very activities (e.g. making self-fulfilling prophecies, setting their own level of aspiration, exploring ambiguity) that could lead to their experiencing psychological success and a sense of competence."

Argyris (1972: 96)

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How does the trainee guru create an idea that can be finally manufactured in a person's head? There are two ways. First, he can make that idea a little opaque so as to necessitate the individual to "unpack" it. This relates to the point made in section 3.8 about neither communicating in too simple language (rejected as obvious) nor in obscure language (rejected as academic). The solution is to re-label or "ancronynmize" the idea contents allowing the manager to unpack its contents.

How does idea-unpacking work? Watson (1980a: 38) reported that social scientists who worked with managers reported that the latter sought "simple prescriptions, formulae or even panaceas". He argued however that to supply them with totally ready-made, straightforwardly simple propositions would raise their suspicions. Hence one needed to wrap the simple proposition up in a package form and stick it over with impressive sounding labels such as "hygiene factors", "system 4 management" or "managerial grid". Watson argued that the small amount of effort that the manager had to expend on "unwrapping" the parcel of idea encouraged him to feel that he had worked towards something significant. Such packing and the subsequent unpacking was based upon the simple proposition that people in work organizations will work more effectively if they are allowed to participate in the management of their own work.

A second way in which the manager can achieve idea-ownership is to present it in the form of generalizations that are amenable to manipulation by their users. Argyris (1972: 95) wrote that the customer would select a product which needed his own involvement and effort to implement it successfully. Managers were thus offered the possibility of both psychological success and a feeling of competence. Management ideas which gave their users a great deal of freedom of application, and therefore a feeling of ownership, are likely to be preferred. Nichols wrote that :

> *"Managers, being practical men, do not take scientific theories and implement them root and branch. They select and take out what seems to be prudent and appropriate to their particular needs."*

<div align="right">Nichols (1980: 291)</div>

Wahba and Bridwell (1973) criticised Maslow's research from a methodological point of view. They claimed that the Needs Hierarchy Theory was almost an untestable theory. Hall and Nougaim (1968) came to the same conclusion about Maslow, while Watson made similar comments concerning the testing of McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y ideas (Watson, 1980: 40). This lack of verifiability and the need to treat them as social philosophies gives these ideas great manager-appeal. For example, managers could claim that while the idea had not been proved, neither had it been disproved. Beyer and Trice (1982: 600) argued that it was the great latitude given to the management idea users to re-define, alter, combine and generally re-interpret management research findings and ideas that explained their popularity.

Our guru should ideally create ways in which the managers can gain ownership of his idea. Content-wise, it should be flexible enough to permit re-interpretation as required by its users. In this sense, a social philosophy is preferable to definitive, unambiguous research findings. Presentation-wise, some wrapping is required so as to permit later unwrapping.

STEP 4: PROMOTING THE IDEA

The final step that our gurus need to take is to promote their ideas among potential adopters. For the maximum effect, promulgation should be encouraged both through business school academics and through marketing agencies, management consultancies and similar operations.

To appeal to the academics, the research shows that the idea should somehow capture the imagination of lecturers ("hold some valuable truth") which they can communicate; and should provide learners with a perspective that challenges their taken-for-granted assumptions. If this basic idea is accompanied with supporting teaching materials which actively involve the students and give their tutor confidence to teach the idea, the chance of it being regularly included in business school curricula is enhanced. As noted

earlier, compared to the marketing idea of consultants and training companies, the influence of business school as promulgators of management ideas is small.

Ideas can be discussed, but only products and services can be sold. The idea has to be transformed or "productivized" into a teaching device, training event or system-wide intervention which possesses as may of the attributes described in the previous step as possible. Having done this, how can marketing help? First the guru should <u>brand</u> his product and its associated techniques Branding refers to the process of establishing brand names, marks and trade names for a product. Well known brands include "The One Minute Manager" and "Grid Development".

The guru's brandmark can identify his product and simplify handing. It can emphasise a quality level and protect the brand's unique features from being imitated. The brandname can be used to endorse the product with inherent superiority and thus create the basis for price differentiation. This process can be enhanced by attaching its owner's name to it as in the case of Adair's "Action Centred Leadership" or Hersey and Blanchard's "Situational Leadership".

Chapter 5 dealt in detail with the marketing of management ideas and techniques. The promotion of the idea should stress a number of the characteristics presented in step three. Specifically its commonsense appeal, non (or even anti-) theoretical nature; its solution-oriented thrust; high customer control and the possibility of phased application. In Britain, it is probably impossible for the advertising copy to overuse the word "practical".

This part of the chapter has discussed the timing of the management idea launch, its responsiveness to customer needs, idea characteristics and their promotion, all from the aspiring guru's perspective. To the writer's knowledge, popular management ideas have not been studied from this perspective before. It is therefore impossible to compare this analysis with others. However, an analysis was carried out by Gellner (1985: 26) which sought to explain the popularity, not of management ideas but of

psycho-analytical theory. Gellner's work has been quoted throughout this chapter. It is therefore appropriate to end by considering some of his conclusions and lay these alongside those made in this chapter.

Gellner studied Freud and the psycho-analytic movement (Gellner (1985: 26 and 42) in order to account for its appeal amongst amongst practitioners and clients. Comparing Gellner's suggestions with the features identified in popular management ideas in this and other chapters, one can see similarities. Gellner wrote that psychoanalysis offered:

1. Specificity — If offered specificity whereas previously there had only been general outlines.

2. Recipe — It promised succour in a plague. It contained a recipe for the personal salvation, whereas before there had only been ambiguous indications.

3. Organization — It possessed an organization to support and promote its ideas.

4. Terminology — It possessed a scientific terminology whereas before there had only been a literature.

5. Insider status — It achieved the inclusion of its ideas into the prestigious context of medicine whereas previously they had existed in the not greatly eminent ambience of philosophy.

6.	Time	It possessed links to the background convictions of the age.
7.	Commonsense	It stunned its potential proselyte with what he more than half knew (but never knew how to put into words). It provided good reasons for believing its claims.
8.	Unverifiable	A quick and conclusive test of the truth of the ideas was unavailable.
9.	Tension	It engendered a tension in the potential convert with its promise **and** its threat. It invoked in him an inner anxiety as evidence of its own authenticity. It provided some good reasons for doubting or fearing its truth.

Before finally concluding with some suggestions for further research, it is appropriate to make one final observation about management guruship. This concerns the ability of business school academics to secure recognition and credibility amongst both their academic peers and practising managers. In this consideration of the "interesting", Davis (1971) referred to the different assumption grounds of different audiences. He intimated that to be considered interesting to different groups, writers had to amend their approaches to these different audiences.

The academic and managerial worlds have different criteria of value and status assignment. Traditionally, being well respected by academic peers, has meant that one's standing amongst managers has been low. The highest academic status goes to lecturers who talk to and write for fellow-academics

(e.g. Jeffrey Pfeffer). Next come academics who seek to make their ideas available to a wider community of both academics and managers (e.g. Michael Porter, Henry Mintzberg). Finally, there are those who address themselves primarily and perhaps exclusively to managers (Kenneth Blanchard).

Business school academics have lost status in the eyes of their peers as they have tried to communicate with audiences beyond their profession. The academic world offers status, while the business world offers money. The actor's dilemma between the theatre, television and films and television is, in some ways similar.

TOWARDS A SOCIOLOGY OF
MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION

The findings of this study have highlighted a range of cognitive and structural factors that appear to contribute to the high valuation of certain management ideas. Perhaps the thesis has contributed to the development of the *sociology of management idea application*. It was Robert Merton who, in 1949, called for a systematic study of the factors that either impeded or facilitated the application of applied social science for the purposes of practical action. Merton's own study considered the cultural, organizational and political dimensions which inevitably affected utilization. The purpose of this thesis was to make a contribution to the relevance, scope and utility of a small, albeit important segm ent of social science research, that is concerned with the application to management and organizations. Merton (1949, 1973) heightened the need for "applied social research on applied social science".

Holzner (1978) contrasted the classical sociology of knowledge as being concerned with the social bases of intellectual productions. In contrast, a sociology of knowledge application, in his view, should be concerned with the social consequences of knowledge (Holzner and Marx, 1979). It is important to understand the different frames of reference with which people perceive

knowledge and the discrepancies between the frames of reference of knowledge producers and knowledge users. The focus of a sociology of knowledge application argued Holzner (1978), should be the analysis of the organizational arrangements for knowledge production and use, and those which encourage optimal learning. He identified five major issues for consideration. These are listed as sets of questions taken from his writings. They are included in the hope that they may provide a stimulus to others who might wish to investigate the subject.

Social science enterprise

As social science enters the management sphere and influences the manner in which managers perceive and think about what they do, the type of research that is carried out is obviously important. One needs to know what kind of research is undertaken and what conditions shape its nature. How do social scientists in the industrial and organizational sphere select the research that they do? What are the personal, social, structural and political conditions which shape its nature? To what extent do the disciplines and fashions of the disciplines themselves reward certain types of investigations and inhibit others? To what extent do discipline research methods shape the nature of the questions asked and the directions of the enquiry? To what extent are the political and ideological proclitivities of social scientists the determining factors? To what extent do social scientists expect their work to influence managerial action? Through which channels do they expect such influences to flow? When do they expect it to have such an effect? How does this expectation affect their work and how they do it? When they consider themselves as pure scientists, detached critics or management advisors, what kind of research do they do and where do they publish it? What is the effect of their institutional auspices? The source of their funding? Their own status?

Transmission of social science research

The general focus here is upon the way in which knowledge relevant to management and organizations is communicated to managers. What are the channels through which such information flows? Which audiences are reached by the different channels? Once research and theory findings are abstracted or summarized from journal articles and books for managers by trainers, consultants and lecturers, what biases and distortions are introduced? Are there differences in the clarity and cogency of the different information channels? How long does it take for a new management idea to get through to managers? What factors affect the time lag? How are the differences and contradictions in the different management ideas resolved, explained and communicated?

Reception to research amongst managers

How interested and active are managers in finding out about current management ideas? What accounts for the differences in their interests? How do managers evaluate ideas and what criteria govern the attention that they pay to ideas and techniques? What are the properties in techniques and packages that they value that lead them to adopt and implement? How important for them is the source of the ideas and techniques? How importance for acceptance is the channel through which they hear about the idea or technique?

Effects of social science research on management action

Here the main issues relate to the circumstances under which managers draw upon social science in taking action. What form of idea do they tend to use - data, generalizations, concepts or theories? How closely do managers understandings of the social science that they use, approximate to the meanings that the social scientists seek to convey? How do they use their knowledge of social science? What contribution does social science make (compared with other sources of knowledge) to the actions that managers take? What are the consequences of applying social science to the work that

managers do? Are company programmes that are based on social science knowledge more effective or efficient than those which are not? Is the quality of decisions improved?

To whose benefit?

The final area concerns whether it is only managers in an organization who use social science, or do unions use such ideas to oppose management action. When managers use ideas and techniques, in what circumstances does it benefit them and when does it benefit non-managerial groups? Under what circumstances does the use of social science buttress existing company policy, and when does it support and guide change?

This thesis has made a small contribution to the sociology of knowledge application. Knowledge is only one component that enters in managerial policy and decision-making, but it has a sinuous and pervasive effect. Managers do with what they know. Managerial and organizational social science represents only one component of knowledge yet, under certain circumstances, it can carry a special authoritativeness. This is because it is presumed to have a systematic and objective hallmark of science. It also provides a powerful vocabulary that shapes the way in which problems and issues are defined and conceptualised. Despite charges of jargon, social science has become the language of discourse in which managerial policy and action are discussed and carried on.

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APPENDIX

A - List of the most cited management writers

B - Questionnaires circulated to business school academics and managers

C - Transcripts and indexed interpretation of interviewed managers

	Matteson (1974) Journals	Matteson (1974) Books	Pollard (1974 and 1987)	Pugh (1984)	Pugh, Hickson and Hinnings (1984)	Miner (1980 and 1984)	Tosi (1984)	Koontz (1961)	Clutterbuck and Crainer (1990)	Pierce and Newstrom (1988 and 1990)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Adams, J.S.					*						1
Ansoff, I.									*		1
Albrecht, K. and Zemke, R.										*	1
Argyris, C.		2	*	*	*				*		6
Barnard, C.I.	*	*		*				*	*		5
Bennis, W.G.					*				*	2	4
Blake, R.E. and Mouton, J.S.		*		*					*	*	4
Blanchard, K.										3	3
Blau, P.M.		*			*						2
Bono, de, E.									*		1
Boulding, K.	*										1
Brayfield, A. & Crockett, W.	*										1
Brown, A. and Weiner, E.									*		1
Brown, J.A.C.		*									1
Brown, Lord W.		*									1
Burnham, J.				*							1
Burns, T. and Stalker, G.M.		*	*	*	*	*					5
Carlzon, J.										*	1
Cartwright D. and Zander, A.		*									1
Chandler, A.D.				*	*						2
Coch, L. and French, J.R.P.	*										1
Crozier, M.			*	*							2
Cyert, R.M. and March, J.G.		*		*	*						3
Deal, T.E. and Kennedy, A.A.									2		2
Drucker, P.F.	*	*		*	*			*	2		7
Deming, W. Edwards								*		*	2
Emery, F.E.					*						1
Etzioni, A.		*		*		*					3
Fayol, H.	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		8
Fink, S.									2		2
Follett, M.P.		*						*			2
Ford, H.								*			1
Fiedler, F.E.			*	*	*						3
Freeman, R.E and Gilbert, D.R.										*	1
Gantt, J.K.		*		*							2
Geneen, H.								*			1

Gilbreth, F.B.			*					*		2
Gouldner, A.W.					*					1
Handy, C.B.									*	1
Harrigan, K.R.									*	1
Hayes, R.									*	1
Herzberg, F.	*	2		*	*	*		*		7
Humble, J.								*		1
Iacocca, L.									3	3
Jacques, E.				*	*					2
Juran, J.M.								*		1
Kanter, R.M.								*	2	3
Katz, D. and Kahn, R.L.		*	*			*				3
Kets de Vries, M.F.R.									*	1
Kilmann, R.									2	2
Koontz, D. and O'Donnel, C.	*	*								2
Kotler, P.								*		1
Kotter, J.P.									*	1
LeBoeuf, M.									2	2
Levinson, H. and Rosenthal, S.								*		1
Leavitt, H.J.									2	2
Levitt, T.								*		1
Lawler, E.E.					*					1
Lawrence, P.R. and Lorsch, J.W.			*	*	*	2				5
Likert, R.		*	2	*	*	*				6
Lindblom, C.E.				*	*					2
Loden, M.									2	2
McCormack, M.H.									*	1
McLelland, D.						*				1
McGregor, D.	2	*	*	*	*	2				8
Maccoby, M.									*	1
Mackay, H.									*	1
March, J.G.				*						1
Manz, C.C.									2	2
March, J.G. and Simon, H.A.		*	*	*			*	*		5
Maslow, A.H.	*					*		*		3
Mayo., E.			*	*	*			*		4
Michels, R.					*					1
Miles, R.H. and Cameron, K.S.									*	1
Miller, E.J. and Rice, A.K.			*							1
Mintzberg, H.				*	*		*	*		4
Mooney, J.D.			*					.		1
Morrison, A.M.									*	1
Naisbitt, J.									3	3
Ohmae, K.									*	1
O'Toole, J.									2	2
Odiorne, G.S.								*	*	2
Ouchi, W.							*		2	3
Owen, R.								*		1
Parkinson, C.N.					*			*		2
Peters, T.								*	6	7
Perrow, C.						*	*			2
Pinchot, G.									*	1
Porter, L.W. and Lawler, E.E.						*				1
Porter, M.								*	2	3

									Total
Pugh, D.S.			*	*					2
Quinn, R.								1	1
Revans, R.								*	1
Rice, A.K.		*							1
Roethlisberger, F/Dickson, W.*									1
Rowntree, B.S.		*							1
Sayles, L.		*							1
Schein, E.H.		*						2	3
Scott, W.	*								1
Schumacher, E.F.				*		*			2
Sculley, J.								2	2
Selznick, P.						*			1
Sheldon, O.		*							1
Silverman, D.		*		*					2
Simon, H.A.		*	*	*	*	*			5
Sloan, A.P.			*	*			*		3
Stodgill, R.W.					*	*			2
Strauss, G.		*							1
Tannembaum, A.S.		*		*	*				3
Taylor, F.W.	*	*	*	*		*	*		6
Thorsrud, E.					*				1
Thomas, P.							*		1
Thompson, J.D.		*			*	*			3
Thompson, V.					*	*			2
Tichy, N.M. and Devanna, M.A.								2	2
Toffler, A.								*	1
Townsend, R.								*	1
Trist, E. and Bamforth, K.W.			*	*					2
Urwick, L.F.							1		1
Vickers, Sir G.			*	*					2
Vroom, V.H.			*	*	2			*	5
Waterman, R.H.							*	2	3
Watson, T.							*		1
Weber, M.			*	*	*				3
White, R.P. and Velsor, E.								*	1
Whyte, W.H.				*					1
Williamson, O.E.				*		*			2
Woodward, J.			*		*	*			3
Zaleznik, A.								*	1

APPENDIX B

GLASGOW BUSINESS SCHOOL

Glasgow Business School, Department of Management Studies, University of Glasgow,
53-59 Southpark Avenue, Glasgow, G12 8LF, Scotland. U.K. Tel: 041-339 8855, Telex 777070 UNIGLA, Fax: 041-330 5669

Dear Student,

I am carrying out a nationwide study to determine which management ideas are particularly valued by managers and management students and why. Hopefully, such information can assist in adapting the content of management courses so as to better suit the needs of participants.

During their professional careers, managers will be exposed to a wide range of different management ideas. These may be in the form of theories, concepts, models, techniques or research findings. The term "management idea" is therefore a useful short-hand term to refer collectively to a number of different things.

These ideas may have been obtained from watching a training film, reading a book, attending a conference, seminar or consultant's briefing, or participating in an outside (public) workshop, an in-company training programme, or a MBA or diploma programme.

I should like to ask for 15 minutes of your time to complete the short questionnaire overleaf which contains three questions.

Column 1

Write in the ideas which you have found most valuable. There is space for up to four such ideas. Be specific in your identification. Rather than writing "leadership" for example, indicate which theory of leadership you are referring to.

Column 2

Opposite each management idea, indicate which aspect of it you value most. A single idea may have a number of different aspects or themes. Indicate the one you attach the greatest value to.

Column 3

Finally and most important of all, consider each management idea in turn and explain why you personally find it so valuable. Please be as detailed in your explanation as space permits.

May I thank you in advance for your co-operation. All the answers will be treated in strict confidence and no individual or institution will be identified in any report. Please return your completed questionnaire to me directly by posting it back in the stamped-addressed envelope provided by

Yours sincerely,

Andrzej Huczynski

Andrzej Huczynski
Senior Lecturer

Professors Miles M Dryden, James G Gulliver, James M Livingstone, Re. mond C Vaile, J.C Spencer, David H Weir.

Column 1	Column 2
Management idea	Specific aspect / dimension found valuable

Column 3

Reasons why idea found valuable

600

CASE FO.	INDEXED INTERPRETATIONS

AAH ... some of it if you would just to talk it across left to right, top to bottom..

F The first one is Walton's *From Control to Commitment in the Workplace.* I guess a lot of my ideas I get from scanning the literature and I'm not sure, I might be unusual in that respect because I reckon I read more than most and probably try and use more ideas than most. This idea of Walton's which showed this continuum, the managerial continuum going from a highly structured controlled environment to one which was really designed to elicit commitment from people struck a chord and fitted in with the company philosophy and also provided an echo of a sociotechnical system stuff that I am also a bit of a fan of, and this provided a structured way of looking at the business, it tackled all the symptoms if you like of a controlled situation, and all the symptoms of a situation where you were enlisting commitment and we could identify with it, and so using that idea that developed into what became known as the company's vision process, so initially that was a series of ideas between me and Derek and Derek used really to bed himself in in his senior management role and condition perhaps his way of running the business, and eventually I guess it developed into this thing called the vision process, so that was a useful thing.

Skinner's *The Productivity Paradox,* again that was good because it confirmed some of the thoughts I had that some of the things we do in chasing what we believe to be productivity in fact can be counter-productive and it was good

B. Correspondence - with personal view.

A. Steps/principles.

A. Universality.

B. Correspondence with company culture and fitted in with the plant manager's approach.

B. Legitimation - of subject's existing views and company actions.

to have some sort of authoritative reference which explained this in easily understandable terms that I could point to and even for my own comfort say well you are not totally right, then there is some sense in not totally chasing productivity at the expense of everything else. So that one helped me, not necessarily the organisation, and it started me thinking of different ways that we should be running the business and again it backed into this idea of a listing commitment from people rather than beating in to them, let's gently pull it out of them and elicit their support.

The Tavistock Institute stuff, sociotechnical systems approach - really that was a course I went on down at Minster Lovell probably about two years ago. Again it confirmed my views that the organisation was a more complex beast than is usually assumed, that the functional way we organise ourselves is not necessarily the most productive way we can organise ourselves, and again it also confirmed that the idea really and the trick to all of this is to try and line everybody's value up along lines of force which are leading to achievement of the business objectives, so that was good stuff as well. This one was an article really I got out of this stuff that the work research unit published a sort of compendium of extracts - I nicked this out of - it's got joint design of technology, organisational and people growth, and it was a conference in Venice and, it's amazing these conferences are never in Scunthorpe, and it was of interest and very useful because it set out to explain why big information technology projects in particular tend to suboptimise and they tend to suboptimise because

B. Legitimation - appeal of having one's own personal views substantiated by outside 'experts'.

A. Communicability - ideas explained in easily understood ways.

A. Applicability (pay-off) - in this case to the subject rather than the company.

B. Revelation - revealing different ways of proceeding, hitherto not thought of.

B. Legitimation - between personally held beliefs and ideas presented.

B. Correspondence.

A. Unitary perspective - aligning individual aspirations with company goals.

B. Revelation - interest gained through the explanation of the reasons for observed past failure.

they're regarded as the province of the systems people, the DP information technology people tend to run them and they suboptimise because they don't look at the organisation as a whole so that was useful, particularly moving into the MRPII stuff and confirmed again I guess that we are on the right track and we are doing things appropriately and it is sensible to take this holistic view of the organisation when you're trying to change it, so confirmed at lot of the above that we knew about and also legitimise the sort of sociotechnical systems approach that I believe we have been using for some time although most of us don't realise it. That's basically it.

AAH   Let me ask you this final question then, looking up and down the right hand column if I was to say well I'm going to invent a super duper management idea which you will definitely find valuable is the word, what features, what characteristics should it possess based on what you have just said for you to actually say yes it is valuable for me.

F   It would have to take a sort of holistic approach to organisational change, it would have to give an insight into the sort of strategic nature of organisations, it would have to contain large elements that said you've got to line individual's objectives up with the objectives of the organisation, so it would probably have to contain those elements for me to find it attractive.

B.   Legitimation - idea provides a 'role of confidence' in past actions, legitimating them (and their promoters).

A.   Unitary perspective.

AAH   .... talk of competitive priorities in manufacturing and then focus really on this bit, because these will be different and as you see are different for everybody, some similarities, but the recurring features tend to come out and that's what I've been looking at.

F   I found the exercise, I wouldn't say difficult, but to try an focus on two or three or four things like this is an interesting thought process. I think what you ended up with basically was more current things, I mean there's stuff that if you go back far enough then was quite significant at the time but things at the moment or recently I have found of value.

Competitive priorities in manufacturing - we went on a conference on manufacturing strategy two years ago, and it was really, a lot of case study type material and it was focusing on which you know what it was that was making certain companies successful and very much pedalled this idea of you can't be good at everything, there's a number of them, there's five or six specific areas in which you can target to be successful - cost, quality, innovation, dependability, variety, and all that sort of thing, and you basically have to pick the one or two you want to target. For me that was a bit of an eye opener because we had obviously set our sights on being world-class manufacturer but I think in a sense we didn't, you know we knew where we wanted to get to but we didn't know how to get there, and I think what we were trying to do was to be good or best on all fronts, and as a result I suppose we were trying to do the decathlon and really we should have been

A.   Authorization (other companies).

B.   Revelation - initial scepticism ('pedalled') gives way to true belief (eye-opener).

A.   Lack of roadmap (steps/principles).

B.   Analogy - used to confess errors of the past.

concentrating on the sprint or something, or the swimming or something, so I think the value of it was like a penny-drop type thing you know, like a veil is lifted and you see oh yes you see that's logical, it kind of illuminates something - I don't know how you would describe that, so basically it helped clarify our mind on something we were struggling with and then enabled us to go back and look at our business and start to analyse it in terms of a checklist that was given to us and which aspects of this would we see as important, and that's something that might change over time but given our situation within this corporation what would be the aspects that we could focus on and get some leverage out of it, so it's really been quite a powerful technique and there's a number of people from this site been on the conference and they were all talking a common language, so that's really ...

Total quality management - I'm not that familiar with that one yet it's something we're starting to get into, we're a bit behind many companies in our progress in some of these things, but as part of the MRPII implementation we did get a little bit of learning on total quality management and used this customer supplier approach to rather as we were redesigning policies and procedures and so on we were going to do things rather than just have departments say well how do to what do you want to do differently, do you want to do things differently, we encouraged each function to identify who the people were they were supplying - whether internal, external - and who their main suppliers were,

B. Revelation by analogy
Analogy - subject helped to see 'wood from the trees' Gains insight.

A. Steps/roadmap.

B. Empowering.

B. Comparison - own company progress with that of others.

who they were a customer of and to develop the new way of doing things in relation to satisfying your customer and helping your supplier to change their ways so that they satisfy you and I think again this was just an attractive way of looking at the need for change, the need for improvement and you're going to have use some methodology for making changes and the idea of customer/supplier relationship was a neat little method of approaching that. Total quality goes, there's a number of aspects to total quality management and again the idea of continuous improvement and employee involvement and its almost like truism - how can you possibly do it any other way, so it's fairly straightforward but I think the attraction to total quality management as we learn about it is that it brings a set of fairly not too difficult to handle tools you know there are one or two like statistical process control which are a bit technical, but a lot of the techniques like fish bone diagrams and parito analysis and so on and brainstorming and things like that are things that people can be taught and people can relate to but they're still powerful because they need to tap in to employee involvement and sort of incremental improvement if you can get a hundred good ideas going in different areas then the sum of all that can be reformed quite a bit. Total quality management is something that appeals to us as we try to improve the business.

Just-in-time concepts, this is really quite powerful in terms of the views that we all had I think about running ??? manufacturing

B. Appeal of logical approach described.

A. Steps/principles.

B. Revelation - newly acquired knowledge blurs alternative strategies.

A. Possesses idea-techniques.

B. Scientific/logical approach - tools, processes capable of being communicated.

B. Correspondence

A. Unitary perspective.

and the focus on long production runs and specialisation and so on and just-in-time challenged a lot of that - kind of originates from recently came from Japanese, I believe it sort of originated back in the Western culture but the Japanese got as usual got best at it but you know it kind of brings out different ideas of breaking production down and reducing inventory and using that regarding inventory in a sense waste, a symptom of waste process but if you can reduce inventory you can identify the problems and so on. Again it's really another good focus for improvement, for concentrating on doing the right things, eliminating non-value added activities and that sort of language which is very attractive - maybe because I'm an accountant - but the idea of identifying which ??? adding value, identifying all the other things and critically looking at what you are doing is very attractive. It's a way of re-examining what it is you're doing and focusing on the things you want to do and eliminate the things you don't want to be doing but it is very difficult to do that if you don't have a framework and just-in-time provides a framework for doing that so and the just-in-time literature comes with if you like, you get things like a wheel and it shows you all the different spokes and elements, about maintenance, inventory and employee development and pay systems and so on - it ties together so it comes with a map laid out as to what you should be doing.

Control to commitment - I probably have got these a bit in reverse order because this was kind of this was the first of these

B. Challenging existing views.

B. Challenging existing ideas.

B. Revelation - revealing that which needs to be focused on.

B. Challenge to accepted approaches.

A. Steps/principles.
B. Logical appeal: examples of the accompanying tools, steps.

A. Steps/principles.

four that I came across and this was really saying that if you want to improve your organisation then you should be thinking in terms of cultural control rather than controlling people - you can create the right culture and climate and identify where you want to take your business to, the way to do it is through energising commitment in the workforce. I think I was probably tuned in to that anyway but the thing about that article that I liked was it really set up a vision of here's what your organisation of the future should look like and again it went in to a number of areas and said in employee area and technology area, and set out what sorts of things you might be looking for - it didn't say this is a blueprint for you but it gave you a kind of approach you could then use to look at your own organisation and suggested ways in which you just couldn't go from where you are today and suddenly flip to where you want to be, you then have to develop programmes and recognise that there will be a time frame?? involved, so I think the attraction of that was it enabled us to basically think in terms of where do we want to be and what programmes do we have to develop to get there, and in a sense I say these are a bit in reverse order because some of these other things then start to be a chain of methodologies, we're getting to where we want to be. So all of these things to different degrees are now being used and very much interactive and so and we're trying to move the business forward. The whole thing is around what we do today isn't good enough we want to change.

AAH   Let me conclude then by asking you one more question. If I was going to sit down and invent a really valuable management idea

B.   Revelation: idea as speaking itself.

B.   Correspondence - personal predisposition and idea.

A.   Steps/principles/roadmap.

A.   Contribution/ownership.

A.   Steps.

that would get you excited and provoked your own thoughts, what would it have to possess in terms of its characteristics, what should it have, given what you've said in terms of these past ones which you have found valuable what would it have to have in order for you to personally find it valuable?

F   I suppose it, I mean obvious things are it would have to be logical, it would have, it might not be something that we had thought of before but when you were exposed to it it would have to make sense, you know kind of advance your understanding but fit in with once you are aware of the concept, yes I can see that type of thing, as opposed to well you may say that but I just can't relate to that, I have to be able to relate. I think some structure would be very helpful if it has a kind of scaffolding it says here's where you want to be, and here's tools and so on which you can use the sum total of this toolbox, then you get a change to get there, MRPII is like as well, I didn't put MRPII on here, it's funny I didn't put it on but in a sense I did see that as being one tool whereas these are broader, but it would have to come equipped with tools, in other words you have to motivate your workforce type of thing in order to get them to do a better work, it would not be any use to me, whereas if it said you want to motivate your workforce here's a step by step, here's the tools and so on or here's where you want to get to, here's what it would look like, here's a series of steps and a series of tools you can use, so it would have to be that specific or whatever. It's helpful if they're kind of case study or examples of how it's being used so that you can relate to so that's the sort of

B.   Logical.

B.   Corresponding to existing personal ideas.

A.   Steps/principles.

A.   Steps and idea-tools to implement them.

A.   Authorization - from the use by other companies.

benchmarking type approach that you see or somebody else has done that and look at what they have achieved, that kind of inspires you to say you are speaking sense as opposed to well it's a lot of theory but whoever actually achieved that so these sorts of things.

AAH   Lets just kick off - if you can talk me through this, starting off with the scientific approach as you call it.

C   Yes, it is a little bit difficult to define the scientific approach although I am finding that now that I am reading a lot on total quality management that the term is coming up more and more frequently and it obviously refers to a disciplined approach basically as I have said here. I did three years' research at university in chemistry and then left to go into data processing, largely because I felt that dealing with test tubes didn't really turn me on terribly much and I wanted to deal much more with people, but at the same time three years working on a long term project at that particular age - sort of early twenties - certainly does leave its mark on someone, and I think that anything, looking back anything that I have ever done since I tend to approach the same way and that is stating what the objective of whatever I'm involved in and then doing a lot of reading and fact finding to give myself a good knowledge base and then basically working in a sort of fairly logical way from that particular point towards the objective. I think to some extent the ... I've lets say I've felt throughout the twenty odd years that I've - almost thirty years now - that what I did in those three years in scientific research has always been relevant within the data processing world in terms of through processes and it seemed to certainly be the first thing I should put down here. I think that it suits my temperament basically because as I've said here it is basically a pro-active one, I'm

B.   Comparison (previous and current approaches).

B.   Logical approach - defies elements of scientific approach.

B.   Predisposition: relates working style to personality.

defining the objective and probably agreeing that with whoever has allocated me to do the task and from that particular point the responsibility for getting to the end I have always felt was mine and that I wouldn't be expected to go back and get basic assistance from anyone - I would get that from reading and then just following the path a logical path from there, always giving a lot of emphasis to facts basically, and I think that's probably the main basis of a scientific approach, that it doesn't really tend to do an awful lot in terms of people relationships and I think initially that was something that was missing in my style.

I referred to, the second one here managerial effectiveness which was described by Drucker in *Effective Executive* and that was a book certainly that from the time it came out in 1967 I read frequently - I probably read every six months because there were so many interesting things in it and I think it basically tied in very well with the scientific approach because it really argued I feel that effectiveness was important and it was very down to yourself to develop that effectiveness. The idea of the executive, even though I wasn't in a managerial position, I was still in a profession and the results and whatever I did to a large extent were always due to myself. It was significant even in the early days and both with the logical discipline of a scientific approach and some of the tips that basically came from the *Effective Executive*, that basically really was the basis of my style I think through to probably about the mid 70s. By that time I had been manager of a DP

B. Scientific process defend against task failure and personal status loss (and others' esteem loss).

B. Inadequacy of logical/scientific approach.

B. Complemented basic approach.

A. Contribution potential.

A. Timeliness.

A. Individual focus.

A. Applicability.

department, in fact by the mid 70s the time I came here this was my third DP department and I probably hadn't been too strong on the people aspects of things, it was all driven by goals and setting challenges to people and in fact to a large extent I applied the principles of the *Effective Executive* to my subordinates, basically set them a task and the challenge was there for the people to meet that themselves and I think it was only much later that I realised that that didn't really work with nine out of ten people, that they couldn't operate without a fair degree of assistance and I think around about the early 70s I started to do a bit of additional reading and just said theory X and theory Y seemed to be the simplest way to describe the readings that introduced the different styles of people and the fact that you really had to take into account the different make up of people you were working with and I eventually accepted that the setting really taxing goals didn't really suit the majority of people I was working with. I had moved out of a sort of academic environment basically, and the first few companies I was with I really was working with a lot of graduates who weren't too unlike myself but once I was into the 70s and certainly by the time I came here I was working basically with a different type of person who didn't have the same drive internally from themselves and the theory X and theory Y idea means they had to draft a totally new style on and I felt once I though about it I felt myself quite in harmony with that idea. What I said here is that it certainly gave benefits but the fact that I wasn't setting those challenging goals I'm not really sure that the

B. Experience of failure (opposite of personal potency).

B. Timeliness.

B. Correspondence.

A. Applicability (pay off).

performance of the department works as well, but at the same time you have to take the material that you actually have. I think I've moved more and more towards giving people more way in their own work, setting the goals for them that they in a way that best suits them so really the logical aspect of, the cold logical aspect lets say, of organising work has certainly been softened a lot. I think I was really ready then to pick up responsibility for total quality management which I sort of define as the three aspects I have listed there, focusing on the customer, employee participation and continuous improvement and a lot of that really works through teams and how basically do you motive teams and such like, so really you are coming a long way from looking at tasks and how do you achieve your goal with those tasks in strictly by analysing the task to really saying what is the material I am working with and how can I start to motivate people basically to give them job satisfaction and therefore achieve the goals in a way that realising the material you are working with gives you the best results.

As I said I think initially the interesting this is though that I still have approached total quality management with the same scientific approach in as much as it was just a title to me, didn't mean very much and I have taken a year and some of the people I have worked with and I have been sort of fortunate they have a little bit of the same nature that they have done an awful lot of background reading, so again we are still at the stage of setting, our information again is based on the initial research that I would always have done. From that I have now

B. Timeliness.

A. Individual perspective.

got a fair understanding of what the task is about. I can now take basic reading and set that in to a context that will enable us to go after the objectives in the task, but the nature of the task has really been to motivate people basically, so the two have come together very well I think in there. I suppose the goal is really to, when we're training people to work in teams and in particular to go after improvement problem solving, quality improvement teams and such like, I think its interesting that even though you tend to be dealing with people on the shop floor very often we still have to train them I think to set their objectives and to go out and collect data that is required to enable them to analyse causes so in a micro sense the whole scientific approach is introduce in there so really what I did when I sat down rather than just say what four things affected me I mean I probably came up with about the big four but I can see as I spent a wee bit of time thinking about it I could see a link and a development for myself through that, so over almost thirty years basically.

AAH Can I ask you one final question, looking down the right hand side, focusing on the question of value, what makes a management idea valuable to you? What in the future for example would you look for in a management idea, you listed some from the past, that would grab your attention and make you feel you wanted to know more about it, or read about it, or something?

B. Integration - ideas contained in books related to desired outcomes

B. Correspondence: details elements of TQM approach and draws parallels with his preferred scientific (logical) approach.

L   I think the things that you tend readily to see as potential value are ideas that you can immediately relate to a particular experience that you have and something that I suppose very often confirms results that you've worked on over a period of time. I tend to find very often we even analysing it as a location here we try things and you have a degree of concern that it hasn't really worked and you don't know why and you tend to struggle round a variety of different reasons why that didn't really work and to come across an idea in a management book that actually says you're not unique, this has been seen, I mean just to give an example, one of the major things we have attempted to do over the last few years here is to introduce vision which you no doubt have heard of and basically again it says we've got a concept there that focuses obviously on doing a first class job but by doing that, by maximising the job satisfaction that an individual will get, we have talked about that at great length and we have set ourselves out to get that message over to employees, but we found it very difficult to come up with concrete projects that can make that meaningful and just to read an article that says this is always a problem of quality of work life and this is a way to go about it would be the sort of thing that would grab one's attention. I think that if you look at it in the major ones I think it's these ideas I've seen here were I suppose new ideas the ones I've listed there and you when you read them I suppose it has to strike a chord with you that says I've never really thought of that before or if I did and very often I think people refer to these

B.   Correspondence (to current problem or experience).

B.   Legitimates - "confirms past experiences"

B.   Revelation - of previously inexplicable failure.

A.   Steps to improvement principles.

B.   Correspondence - strikes a chord.

B.   Revelation - idea unthought of.

as common sense and its so often they maybe common sense but you've never actually really thought I could apply that in that particular way, so its something you see that will change your approach to a way that you can feel comfortable would give advantages basically, and I mean total quality certainly which is the most recent one here focus on the customer, I mean its something that you think you always do and then you say well we don't really and we certainly really didn't do it in such a rigorous way as this and you think well basically what is that going to give me, what's it going to give the corporation and just by a little bit of speculation you can say that really adds a totally new tool to my armoury basically. I mean its, I find only a few of them really do that. I mean a lot of the ideas you pick up in reading I tend to sort of dismiss and say that's really of some interest but it's really a researcher who is, and I'm not getting at anyone here obviously, but it really is a researcher who has gone after something and he has come up with what might be a very interesting idea but really what is the practical nature of that and I think four out of five fall done on it, it's of interest but it's not really practical, it's not something that you can weld into your style and really move yourself or the company you are working with forward at all.

I don't know if I answered it but it certainly I think it to me it's an idea that you can work against you can attempt to see in use and really changing something quite significantly and in a positive direction.

B.	Revelation - reorganises previously known knowledge.
B.	Corresponding - fits into preferred ways of acting.
A.	Applicability (pay off).
B.	Corresponding - with actions deemed acceptable, but never actually implemented before.
A.	Management control.
A.	Applicability potential.
B.	Correspondence - to fit into existing style.

AAH: ...we get people to highlight the things they found valuable so if you just take it from the left-hand side across.

GC: O.K. eh this model of a how people are motivated eh I think it is the porter's law model but its from the Open Business School's Effective Managers Course and eh I came across it four years ago when I studied the course and I actually try a lot of the things they do are work. I like it because it brings together all the various theories and models. The reason why its I found it valuable is is what the reasons are as follows: one I can actually look at that model and relate it to the people I'm dealing with in the work situations, and I can work through from effort eh to performance and I can pick up clarity of objectives. That means I can bring in performance planning eh and eh eh having established these performance plans up-to-date I see them on a day-to-day basis to help clarify ... them. The resourcing aspect comes off that like in extra performance of ... and resource that I clarified and checked it and also pass on the department planning that ties in to the abilities and styles needed, so my job as a manager is to ensure there is a very tight link between effort and performance by clarifying objectives, resourcing and training.

A.	Application potential.
B.	Integration - diverse thought into single framework.
A.	Application potential.
A.	Contribution potential.
A.	Application.
A.	Payoff.

The next bit is the the performance of ...... towards maximum performance and to do that people must be good at their jobs, its a link between performance and outcomes eh and the differentiation between intrinsic and extrinsic actually picks a mass of other things

B.   Timeliness.

which I am doing, conditioning, they pick up consequences eh the sort of extrinsic outcomes which I can provide to the job, also it brings in makes me think about job design which is very powerful and eh I think its .... building in the job significance, job eh job variety, this sort thing, so the job itself provides intrinsic outcomes, so it provides me with that, also it emphasises again that I need to ask people what the value is outcomes eh because I find time and time again that I really do not know what goes on inside people's heads, I make assumptions and assumptions can be totally and utterly wrong, so we need to create situations all the time to continually ask and I keep getting surprises, so it helps me to do that. .... job satisfaction and a bit about asking them its these outcomes must be pursued by them and thats what prompts me to ask them to try and understand what drives them through to effort etc., so its it just says what thinking what a mass of difference of models and its a very practical thing whick allows me to organise all the models which come across. Is that...

B. Revelation direction of attention to focus action on areas likely to produce effects.

B. Challenging - preconceptions.

A. Applicability.
B. Integration of diverse thoughts.

AHH: Yep, thats thats very.... thats the first one,

GC: Thats that one and now eh the the other model which I think is extremely useful this idea of activity analysis which is actually based on an article by Paul Brown in Computer Training, September 1985, and as a manager of the people and processes at the moment thats how I look at it. I've got achieved results through people and these people carry out processes and I carry out processes and a lot of talk about quality and eh satisfying customers and which

internal customers external customers eh and being competitive in our industry being in Britain and being competitive in Europe and the world so we are asked to think very much about quality now I can never understand what the hell quality these quality initiatives were because it seems to me quality is a result of managers doing their jobs effectively, so but you need some sort of ... approach to help focus my mind on customers and suppliers and on processes eh so you can work with your staff to a previous processes. An activity analysis model is quite simple you have people carry out a process which can break down into activity and task or even behaviours and we don't get hung up on that we just we just focus on what we do in the workplace some which ... other we want to improve and then out of that process or activity comes an output and that .... information that output goes to a customer and the customer reads who who gets the output eh and equally well the quality of output depends on the quality of input and the suppliers produce the input so you've got look back to your suppliers as well and you then get a look at the output to see if it meets the customer's requirement which is quality, again you are prompted actually to go and speak to your customer and to decide what he or she or it thinks what quality is, but it may be an organisation similarly with the supplier, so it focuses for example on .... using this model of them just now, I am actually putting up a huge board 8 feet by 4 board, the supplier through to customer along the top and brainstorming what are the activities by just roughly choosing an area to work in based on other

B.   Empowerment - provision of a route through confusion allowing actions to be taken in pursuit of the objective.

B.   Logical - judgement of simplicity made on the description of the steps described.

things the do in that area and then deciding how .... to get two or three sort of processes and we always arrive at something eh which is meaningful we then work on a name for that and continue to use that name and then we brainstorm the customers and then work out put in all the outputs and its actually quite amazing how many customers there are and how many outputs for one then we can link them together and then systematically have the supervisor come in ... our customer whats happening, same with our suppliers and what I've found is that staff at all levels can see at a glance what the process is about as opposed to flow charts and other methods which are clearly necessary for analysts and ... So that helps me to deal with quality and helps me change staff's behaviours and how they behave towards customers and it actually I think it actually changes their thinking they begin to think in terms of the process conducive to suppliers and customers and .... eh

An idea which again came from Paul Brown who did his research into effective managers and since managers focus on sort of measurement and well I tend to continue reappraising what how I'm getting on and eh it was just a sort of simple model if you got a manager or me I am my performance can be measured by what my staff say about me, what my manager says about me, how my business results are you know if I made a profit or whatever, what my peer group managers say about me so I have to work with them and what my customers say about me people who receive the output. So I actually found that very useful to

A.   Applicability (pay off).

A.   Communicability.

B.   Empowers subject toward achieving objective.

A.   Applicability (pay off).

A.   Communicable.

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keep that in my head and its valuable because it means I can focus on measures for the various as and in those areas where I'm not doing very well and I know that I can promise me to sort of say I really need to get on and be a good manager even though they may be not be my suppliers at the moment or customers eh maybe I like the person so there's .... or whatever but it might be that next week I may need that person so it focuses eh eh it encourages me to focus on building up those areas which without that model I would not have thought about and the fourth one is just this idea of getting sort a clear understanding your own strengths and limitations and its probably a sort of separate issue or separate area but that links in to balancing my sort of life goals with business goals that eh its I think it really stems from sort of reading from well managerial and career .....   and .... six or seven years ago or whatever and its realising that my job as a manager is as dependent on what I do outwith the job of manager a lot of the skills are .... skills can be used out ... for example two years ago I was captain of a hockey team just .....   service back for what I got out of it eh I didn't really want to do it but in actual fact it has taught me more about leading a team and what to do than any course I have actually been on so eh even if you are pretty tied up in your job even for that reason alone its important to set goals outwith your work and also life goals to have a sort of ten fifteen year sort of plan it sort of puts your job in context as a manager and stops you getting totally wrapped up in it because its really quite important to realise that you don't run people's lives you just run a business and you

B. Empowering by revealing that which needs to be considered and changed so as to produce successful change.

A. Individual improvement.

B. Correspondence - in this case, between work and non-work areas

A. Leadership.

try create a boundary in which people can grow but their growth and their job is their responsibility ultimately your job is to create an environment where the results are produced and people tend to get developed and eh and eh eh develop whilst meeting their goals so I picked up from various sort of writers books you know this sort of theme and eh its actually quite... goals if if I could just say its its also very practical because we .... investing in excellence which eh eh we wouldn't use but I went on that course to evaluate it, but the one thing which actually which is quite clear to me is this business of actually when you when you've go to do something or if you want to do something or change something and you're not quite sure where to go and not to worry about the bit in the middle to actually create the picture and if you want to show this picture with other people say well this is where I want to be in six months' time and I look back and see myself doing this for a long time let's go to Australia in two years you are standing in Australia, let's in ten years time spend half your time in Australia half your time here, it may not be like that may be half the time we go to a cottage in the highlands, but but you begin to work towards it, and that opens up this particular activity system or greatest of..... and you begin to notice things which have sort of made towards that and I find that massively powerful in work and also imparting that to the staff so it lets you relax and not worry because we will get there, the captain says suddenly I'm sitting here and I hadn't thought about asking you about com.... but you mentioned something and I said well I'll ask Andrew and ask him and its just you begin to see the things which

A.   Applicability.

B.   Empowerment - example of giving confidence to proceed into the unknown.

B.   Revelation - realization reduces anxiety gives feeling of confidence.

might help you and as time passes you arrive, whereas I used to think that if I could have got there I can't move until I have worked out every step a thousand steps, a million steps to get there in six months but eh so that last one is a little bit mixed its less well focused but its around that sort of area.

D   The response that I had to the original question wasn't so much trying to rank which I felt was the most important things, there were things I had come across recently which I thought were innovations and therefore interesting, but I don't think for instance that I would say they were more important than financial awareness nor anything like that, so I wouldn't like you to think or to distort anything by saying I think these are the four most important things in that order that any manager should be aware of right, that would be .... well not so much that but just in case it takes away from the value of what you are doing. I would probably maybe make things a bit differently if I was going to go through.

AAH   I think there are common themes coming through, even the financial stuff, as I was hoping to...so the actual thing is less important than that one.

D   Surely yes.

AAH   I will talk it through - each item.

D   What have got here - leadership style analysis. I think one of the things, or a couple of the things we are doing just now really do involve getting inputs on our own leadership styles, not just from the boss, but from the people who experience our leadership styles and these are the people that we actually do lead of course. Many times in the ... its something new for us, its something we haven't really done before and I think had we tried it two or three years ago it probably not even have been acceptable, certainly not as willingly accepted as it is today.

A.   Leadership

B.   Timeliness

2.

In my speaking with other companies and finding out what other companies do in this I find very few companies which employ subordinate appraisal if you like. One of the places who are employing it is in our latest management or leadership style development course that we have just started running now. In the past we have run many management development type courses where we've got the shot-gun out really and lined up leaders, managers in the company and given them all a good dose of financial awareness, of conflict handling, of negotiation, selection techniques, you can imagine - what we are doing now is becoming a bit more specific, if you like sharpening up the tools a bit, we are running a six day leadership style course in two modules, the first of which is a kind of almost theoretical but dealing with maybe Maslow's views and getting in to some of the theories and then having a gap of several weeks between the two modules and during that period the participants on the course actually go off with, one of the tools they go off with is a questionnaire on their leadership style, or their management competences or whatever and not only does their boss fill this in and themself fill this in but a number of their subordinates fill them in as well, and then the second part of the course actually employs that and people learn something about themselves, you know they open the envelope and eh they see what other people's perceptions of their leadership styles is and thats one of the tools that we use. One of the things that we are working very hard of course is to change the leadership style in the company

A.   Authorization (other companies).

B.   Logical - comparison of:

- old approach (shot-gun)

with

- new approach (focused "sharp tools")

- tools as elements in the logical approach

A.   Leadership style.

and this is why it is very relevant to us today. Over the years we have employed a very sort of very benevolent leadership style, almost paternalism here, but fairly autocratic as well, you know, the boss says do it and we do it and we don't really tend to challenge up the way too much, so if you like I'm sure you've heard it before in the organisation a sort of benevolent autocracy might be how we could have been described, today I guess we still are. We want to move back to a much more participative management style, like many companies are doing just now, of course this is one of the ways of doing that, and it does, this process of subordinate appraisal for instance does bring home to leaders you know very strongly just how participative they are or are not today, and of course the desired outcome is that people having recognised what it is to be a team player or team leader, what it is to be participative as opposed to many other styles, that people will then start to work at becoming more participative, and may be checking back with their subordinates as to how successful they are actually being with that now that they have some tools to use to do it. What I said really was the creative and productive potential of team work, it goes unharnessed in the UK and in our organisation to a degree and I think one of the key things that we have to do is to help people to understand just what the leadership style today is, whats available, how it can be more participative, and not just that but understand when and to what degree people should be participative because I know that one of the first handicaps we came across when we said well

B.   Timeliness

A.   Authorization (based on other companies' actions, relative assessment).

B.   Empowerment - through the possession of tools.

B.   Correspondence - following sequence conveys the subject's personal value position which the management idea (participation) and the associated idea-tool (questionnaire) reinforce.

we've got to move to be more participative, some folks went out and started almost asking for everyone to vote on everything and of course its not like that either, so an understanding of that is important, and really helping subordinates to understand that is also important, because not only were leaders getting the wrong idea sometimes, but subordinates were thinking well its all going to be different and we're all going to get a vote and everything, so the subordinate feedback appraisal loop I see as a very powerful tool in really moving in the direction we feel we need to move in, and leadership style analysis techniques, and they can be fairly general, are a bit of that, so that was one specific that I find very powerful. Okay do you want me to go to the next one now?

Competency assessment - obviously related to this. What we have used here is the Hay Macberr??? system and I don't know if you've come across this Andrzej have you?

AAH I've heard it mentioned by a colleague but not...

D Okay. We first came across the technique - we were looking at changing - again its part of the change process in the camera division. We really needed to assess, to promote some people to supervisory roles and over the years that had always been done in the traditional way which was interview, analyse, get together, and select, and I think we have always recognised how successful or unsuccessful that process - we are looking for something a bit sharper and we recognised that there were all kinds of things you could employ

B. Empowerment

B

Disappointment/dissatisfaction with current performance.

you know - psychological testing, a whole range of things, but one of the problems of that was how does the output of a psychological test correlate with what we really need, and one of the advantages of the Macberr systems is part of that process really dictates that you do get together with a number of job holders and their leaders and really define what the role that you are talking about actually is, what it should be in the future, what the tasks in the future will be, what the competences if you like will be for the future, people in this role, and they have a number of techniques which really let them zero down fairly sharply on the competences required. For instance they have a what they call a para software system that really puts a number of questions through a funnel system if you like and become sharper and sharper and out pops the answer almost, so thats how we really first used the Hay Macberr system - it impressed us with its objectivity almost, and another thing that impressed us when we were talking about supervisory roles in our camera division was that when the output from that - there were two things - first to establish what the profile of the ideal holder of that role should be, and the design group, the expert group, all job holders and their leaders, they were pretty satisfied that the model they had was the right one and then of course communication was prime in this one was because the next thing was to actually assess other people who hadn't taken part in the design of the thing, to assess their competences and then to measure that against the ideal model if you like and to use that assessment in fact to draw up a

B. Logical - scientific/objectivity concerns expressed in terms of

- data correlation

- focused objectives

- discriminatory potential

- capable of answer production

- bias elimination

- user acceptance

thumbnail two page sketch of ... and how they compared against the role and even although some of these thumbnail sketches of these appraisals or call them what you will, in places as you would expect were fairly critical, in that they said that well here are gaps that you have, the folks themselves really said that's captured me, thats me to a tee, yep I wouldn't really argue with that, whereas my heart was in my mouth a little bit, because I thought people will cry foul and this aint fair, but no we really didn't experience that.

So then ... so you talk about that as a good tool you can use and like all things its not perfect, it wont be perfect and we still have to do a lot of work on the validity of it because you know having gone through the process of saying here's the ideal, here's where you are, this is the gap and lets design a training programme for you that will close the gap. We have retested this over time and say well is it valid, are the competences the right ones, and have we measured people rightly against them, so we've still got a lot of the work to do, but to me and I probably mention it here is one of the tremendous benefits we've had already is that it has forced people to be analytical, to really think about what is important in this role, and its made people think about many of the leadership competences if you like that exist and that people should develop.

We are also in the process of using it just now in a kind of management audit so using again expert teams of people in jobs and looking at the maybe the top 60/70 people in the organisation in leadership roles using expert

- user face-validity

- validity

- re-test

- measurement

teams from that group, we've identified what the competences are for a leader in Polaroid, Vale of Leven, with Macberr's help in using some of the tools that I described earlier and we now have a model of what the leadership profile should be in this company, now it makes some assumptions for instance it accepts almost the fact that as far as task elements go we've always been pretty good at that, we've always been good at making schedule, and pretty reasonable at making quality. The technical bits don't tend to be terribly difficult for us - its where we get to the people that shows that we concentrated on and in fact we've used with Hay we've used the competence assessment technique really focusing on if you like leadership competences, and again its forced people to really have a good hard look at what is required of them and how they stuck up against it, and again we have used subordinate inputs to this as well, but the technique itself is potentially a powerful one I think.

Left brain, right brain, you are probably pretty familiar with that Andrzej.

AAH   In passing I understand it was used here and some of the people participating found it useful.

D   Thats right - about 400 people if you like have enjoyed the understanding of what its about, and that of course is as we would really want to do anywhere its appropriate - that's right across the whole organisation.

AAH   What was it for you that made it valuable?

A.   Principle/step.

B.   Challenged - them to review job activities against company requirements.

D For me it - well I'm probably essentially or predominantly a left brain kind of person - by background I'm an engineer and I found it easy to go towards engineering because my strengths lay in maths and science and these areas and I suppose in the past I might tend for some of the people who might be you know creative people that maybe come up with ideas and thoughts that I used to maybe think were just a bit strange and not really solutions that I would have come up with which would tend to be more analytical, have certainly helped me to understand that there are good reasons why people do think differently and there are good reasons why we should all be listening to each other's ideas and I think left brain and right brain just the understanding that I have about that has certainly helped me to listen a lot more carefully to what people of other thinking preferences would have to say and it even makes me deliberately if I'm getting a group together to talk about something I would now deliberately go and look for people that I recognise to be right brainers, to balance with people who are left brainers, so that we have a whole brain approach in fact to a problem and you really finish up with a much more powerful solution most of the time.   But its also helped in - I even found it helped in just sitting round and talking about differences with people, may be with a subordinate who you might have found difficult to communicate with at times because of may some different behaviour and it really provides and I've seen so many people use it now it provides a very easy tool for people to have a much

B. Revelation: new information produces previously absent understanding which redefines the way existing situation is perceived.

A. Individual focus.

A. Applicability: citation of examples of the benefits:

- producing improved solution

- generalised benefits

- assistance in communication

more open relationship. I could say to you crikey you right brain types really you're really where I'm coming from now lets go through where you're coming from and lets recognise that we are going to be different, but it provides a much - just thinking of the word to express it Andrzej, but it also means that you can open up much more easily areas that you used to have to walk on eggs like because you can both approach it by saying yeah we are different but lets not let that stick a barrier up between us, lets use that positively, and things that you would hesitate to bring out in the past, because you didn't have proof or whatever, I find myself now able to breach some subjects and some things that I would have thought twice about in the past, and I've seen other people use this as well you know.

Yeah I think you know very closely related to that is the realisation that in communications from some studies done in the States only 7% of the communication comes in the words, the rest of it is in the voice and the pitch or the body language in these things. That allied with left brain right brain makes me be much more innovative and maybe thoughtful about how I communicate things and how I check if the communication is understood and the techniques that I might employ. Like there's no point in just putting a notice out so when we see a lot of applications of left brain... if we wanted to go into it a bit more deeply we've actually run courses on left brain right brain, ??? brain, and took that into account and almost splitting the day into four quadrants which would make it the four quadrants

A.   Applicability (pay-off).

B.   Revelation - directs attention to focus actions on areas likely to produce effects.

of the brain - and mean different things to different people, so .... organisational characteristic profiling again this is a really employing one of I suppose many questionnaires available on the subject. ==The value of that is that under a whole number of different headings== like communications, leadership, performance appraisal or performance potential in the company policies, under half a dozen different headings, really gather what various groups think first of all of how this organisation should be and secondly a few people answering the same questions, a second time round only this time saying how actually is this organisation ??   these various items. So first of all you get a its anonymous of course this one, but if you gather enough samples and enough people together you can get a fair idea of how people perceive it should be or how people perceive or actually is or what the gap is or what you should do about it rather than just actually what I think the organisation is like and how I think it should be changing, then if you see some special gaps or some areas where people haven't quite got the right idea of things then they know that thats the group of people you should really be getting together and talking with. There are some surprises, for instance one group of probably described as general public people, having taken inputs like this from managers in the companies, from representatives in the company and from general public in the company if I look back at the first one we did on the general public of the company there was one question that always sticks in my mind and that we communications around this

A.   Universality

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place are should be and the options were really from you know everything comes straight down the line and the far end of that was strong communications, upwards, downwards, sideways. It was interesting that quite a number of people in that survey actually felt that communications should simply come down the way and that kind of took my breath away a wee bit, because here we are trying to strive for communications going in all directions, and yet because of the way people have been conditioned probably in this part of the world over the years, there is a belief that it is management's job all the communications should come straight down, now just knowing that - was it was a flashing light to me that there are actually people who are conditioned to think this way so gathering that kind of information and being able to work with it thats a powerful tool as well, and one we've only used in the last couple of years as too.

I don't know if I have described adequately some of the value of the ..

AAH Let me ask you one final question - you may want to reflect on this before answering - down here we've got a number of elements which in your view contribute to the value of an idea, can you see any of recurring themes among them or to put it another way, in the future if another management idea came along, what kind of characteristics would it have to possess for you in order to get on to this list if I came back in a few years time?

B.   Revelation - gaining insight previously unknown.

D   I suppose I will just talk about things. I suppose the ideas that I selected here were selected because I thought they were innovative, new and powerful techniques. I suppose they were all mostly aimed at leadership rather than technical skills if you like because I believe that is probably our greatest need right at the minute and because these things are more difficult to achieve than sending someone off on a technical course which is considerably easier, and I suppose the common theme would be that almost discarding the idea of being able to sit quietly in a darkened room and come up with the answers so the common theme that we are actually looking for would be something that did gather and gather carefully and validate because I find it is always difficult really what a lot of different people's perceptions and views of the organisation are, ??? like coming out with solutions that don't strike people as worth doing and therefore anything I would see to be attractive in this area would certainly be gathering the opinions of people, giving them the opportunity to influence what was going on, at the same time taking away any apprehension or threat that people might feel in giving these inputs, because giving inputs on your boss can be quite a threatening experience for people. I think its something you get better at, I think the inputs on some of these things we have today are probably influenced a little bit by people thinking well what if my boss finds out I've said this about him. I think the next time we do it maybe more honest, a bit more relaxed, a bit less threatening because it will become a process that people

B.   Innovation, new and powerful.

A.   Leadership.

B.   Timeliness.
B.   Empowering - to overcome hitherto unachieved goals.

B.   Logical.

A.   Applicability (pay-off potential?)

A.   Contribution potential.

see the value in and have enough
trust that they can do it very
openly and honestly, so themes I
would be looking for would
certainly be involving the
participation and influence and
the trust of a great of many more
people than we would probably
have used in the past.

L   .... the first thing that struck me initially was that the things that I had got done, probably the most recent things were fresh in my mind and maybe you are using other techniques from the past, sort of sub-consciously...

AAH   It doesn't matter...

L   I was struck by the first one I got was the participation one, appropriate decision-making, because I could relate back to what I naively set up committees for example, lets have a working party, and we bashed into it and one in particular I can remember very well was we wanted to look at the ship premium we pay and we said lets be participative, we didn't think very much more about it, got a group together of reps. The first meeting was very tentative, we didn't set a remit really, said it was a joint group we had no great plans of what we wanted to do, we just wanted to have ideas on the table. Of course reps after the meeting were going back down to the shop floor and saying don't you agree this, don't do that, what did they say type of thing, so we were under great pressure to come up with something. So I then developed a model, and I called it a model deliberately of ship premiums and what it would mean to different areas of the plant and although I stressed to that group it was a model, I had a barn oak??? time within a day .... go in to that group from one section of a factory and it took us two weeks to get that listed because they quite clearly didn't see the morals, that that was what management wants to do all the time, just using it in this position, so that made me think quite a bit, so when I saw this model that I have explained there in the

B.   Correspondence - between idea and significant memorable event. Illustration to exemplify.

B.   Revelation - in this case, explaining reasons for failure and suggesting alternative strategies.

Harvard Business Review and it also came out of various training courses we have done in here and its very powerful for me, so now if I'm thinking of participation etc. then I look at the decision the result of that, the cost of that, the time scale, all the usual things that part of that, so that had a great effect on me.

The second was one in here as well - this brain dominance profile, yes I started very sceptical of the whole thing - its another American thing that's come across here that sits very well in a corporation but wouldn't sit very well in this sort of culture here, but at the end of it I was overwhelmed by it, it was one of the best courses I have been on in fact. They do various things during the course that brings it home so if you are very analytical and logical for example then they had you at one extreme compared to the people who were spiritual and so on, the right brain side. They then put the two of you together and its very difficult for you to draw something for example, if you want to do it in straight lines, get logical, and the other person goes and squiggles, no great shape, and it was very easy for example to sit with an analytical person and draw a house because each knew what each other was doing, just like that. So there was some very powerful sort of exercises we did on that and the real learning for me was for example, Mike Fitzpatrick and I used to occasionally get frustrated with each other because Mike would lets say we had an issue in the staff group and Mike would say one thing one week, another thing the next week, and that used to frustrate the Hell out of

B.   Revelation - initial scepticism replaced by belief.

A.   Individual focus.

me, and I would say 'last week you said so and so' and of course when you saw his profile, his kind of square profile, he almost goes round the square, he just thinks each problem round and whereas I was very analytical and logical, left brain, so I was driving for the answer and that was the one answer that allowed, but once you understand that in people then you know what people are looking for, and you can relate to each other better. For example my previous boss was very left brain so he would like plenty of graphs and figures and tables, these sort of things, whereas my present boss is not like that, just give me the bottom line, don't confuse me with all those graphs and tables etc. Again that's something I use on a daily basis, if you know of someone's profile.

The Hay McBare??? competency system - I guess these things have been around for a while actually but they have become fashionable again, and again you are very suspicious of these sort of things, that just sort of sweep through, but we in the company were looking at leadership style and wanting to change leadership style, you were involved originally in this in fact, a way back, and vision and these sorts of things. A lot of us have been promoted through our technical ability and not necessarily our leadership ability, interpersonal skills, etc., and over the years we have made efficiencies in labour, but now we want to make a quantum leap forward, a major step forward, we realise we are going to have the synergy that comes of some of the inter-personal skills, so we've been struggling with that, just how do we identify that and I

B. Revelation - ability to explain past inexplicable (human) behaviour.

A. Universal application.

B. Revelation.

A. Leadership

B. Timeliness of idea.

appraised people against that, assessed people against that, and we tried simply adding a few factors to the appraisal system and that wasn't very successful, people dodged that, so along came this competency system - we did some analysis with different things available to us, for example we used psychometric tests and that type of thing to appraise someone's leadership skills or interpersonal skills that were required for the future, and I found the competency one very powerful so what we've done is identify the five key competencies and we as Polaroid managers require in the future to achieve change, and that's been done by looking at who we consider in the company to be the leaders of the future and what trades do they have and what skills do they have, so we've now got a questionnaire that helps us appraise people against these traits, but again the danger is we love questionnaires, we love the results and want to plot them all and do all these sorts of things, because the technical side again and there's a danger that we concentrate on the graphs that you get from these figures rather than concentrate on the actual assessment itself. But the outcome of that should be that there will be some people who are so far short of the competencies we are looking for present leaders that we have to find a technical role for them or they have to find a place outside the company, but we are convinced that's the only way we can make progress now, so I find that exciting and interesting.

B. Logical - sequence of actions, steps and processes. Innate appeal of such approach.

B. Sarcasm - in describing overemphasis upon the 'objective' - scientific measurable elements.

A. Applicability (pay off).

The resources planning - it relates to the previous point to some extent in as much as over the years there has been all this concentration on direct labour and reducing the labour costs and it seems so simple and stupid now looking back you know your materials are about 80 or 90% of your costs, so along came this .... requirement system and I had never been involved in that before and of course it just seemed so much like common sense to me now but why didn't we think of it before, so I think a scheduling tool like that obviously helps you concentrate on where your materials are and can save the company a lot of money so I can see us growing from that looking at the actual processes themselves as part of that so yes that has a big influence on me and my thinking.

AAH   You may well reflect on this for a moment before answering, thinking of looking up and down these forms which you defined as valuable, can you identify any kind of common themes running through these forms and sort of project them into the future and if an idea is to be "valuable" to you personally what kind of characteristics should it have, what kind of features should it have to lead you to define it as valuable and perhaps feature in a list like this in a few years' time?

L   I think as I said before my thinking preference accord to brain dominance profile is the left brain is the analytical one so I am more comfortable in something that can be laid out quite simply rather than an essay type .... generates thoughts of, I guess I'm attracted by reasons for that reason, I

B.   Revelation - figure/ground flash of insight.

A.   Applicability (pay off).

A.   Communicability.

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mean all four of them if you like are that commonalty whether questionnaires or logical approach to, rather than some sort of sociological type theory or idea and that's the theme for me, but if I look to the future the one I felt had most impact on me was the first one, the .... decision-making one, and that's the one that personally I would pay most regard to in the future.

AAH   What is it, I'm trying to get you to go into it and extract the key features that make that valuable and another one less valuable.

L   Its probably the nature of my present job actually because I'm not really directly involved in resources planning one. I am directly involved in the competency one. The brain dominance one I feel once you have done that and that carries on being important - interpersonal skills. The one in my present job I am most involved with would be the decision-taking - a lot of consulting committees, a lot of participative mechanisms, that's why I am so keen on it.

B.   Timeliness.

A.   Individual focus.

AAH   ... your time is devoted to ...

Any other ones or is that ... are those two or three features the key ones for you?

L   I think so, yes, that's why they come to mind.

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AAH ..... particular idea that you found interesting, sorry valuable, the particular aspect of it and more particularly to explain and expand on the reasons why idea found valuable which is the key thing.

E Well I think overall the point of view I was taking here was eventual management with a significant role to play so not in any way deluding from what was meant by manager, eventually major positioners ... policy setting position would be the objective here, that's why it started off with talking about competitive position itself. I refer to Michael Porter but its just because he wrote a book that a lot of people read about competitive position, in how you establish it. It seemed to me that more often than not particularly in established industries but of course in any situation you needed to have a very clear understanding of what you were about and that kind of a simple statement is always very deceptive and just how much is embodied in it. I found that even after a rigorous MBA programme I went through relatively late in late 20s in age, so I had experience behind me even though there were many things that happened in the ten years afterwards, it was only once I really was able to step back and take a session that reviewed some of these .....around how you analyse the position you are in and it was only when I was able to put them in context of a threat to the company involved in that I saw that it had skipped in many of the thought processes particularly early on, early on in your career you are moving through various positions you don't think about this big picture type of thing - you

B.   Timeliness.

B.   Integrate - fit existing knowledge/concerns within broader frame so as to facilitate understanding.

don't have that much cause to but it's downright eye opening in my mind to look at just who your competitors are and just what it is you are doing right or wrong - it's so difficult to just see it from a standpoint of your own culture and how the company got to where it was, what was the source of its historical successes are, they become totally irrelevant when you're talking about what you're going to do for the next five years and its very hard to get that perspective without stepping back so I think that's an all important type of.....

AAH .... allows you to raise this question?

E I think so in the way the particular framework that he sets up and the structure is a convenient one I don't get hung up on one person's way of doing it and its another .. that was the particular one at the time when it became it evident to me that it was important to emphasise I should say.

I will go on to the second point - the whole idea is then what you do with that type of information, how you then develop a strategy. It seemed as if particularly in most disciplines most disciplines particularly the one I'm involved in finance you go right to the heart of things, you start ripping pieces apart and digging and poking but again you could very often muddle along and wonder what the purposes and why you're doing some of the work if you have established some sort of what Rosenberg and Mostanter??? referred to as an over.... goal. Now again a deceptively simple idea knowing

B. Revelation - caused by having a framework with which to step back and reflect.

B. Idea as opportunity to reflect.

B. Empowerment:

- initial ambiguity concerning the purpose of one's activities.

B. Deceptively simple.

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what you're about, where you're heading, you've objectively analysed what your position is if you know what your business is about you then are now translating it into not just a point of view for some senior people to sell to the bankers or shareholders or whatever but you are now trying to take a whole group with you whether that's employees or customers or and you really have to be quite clear in everybody's minds just what that's all about so it becomes very difficult to state that in one objective or one goal, probably impossible in most cases but there should be some attempts made at, some sort of driving vision if you will or goal or whatever you want to call it. It came as a point to me later on as it was well established and it worked for career and starting to look at why things didn't work and why people started to become cynical within an organisation or why markets turned sour or why what used work didn't work any more and that type of thing - it seemed to me a particular value that you were able to direct all of that energy, all of that - particularly where you had evidence of good people ready to do something but needing that direction. I guess that all leads to another overall point to bringing people along with you and it's my third point and I'm pretty involved in it where you take all of the different individual styles of leadership and management and you try to say you know each of them have their own value, you want to try to make use of the strengths different people bring, you want to make use of the differences you want not turn aside anything

B.   Empowerment:

- subsequently replaced by idea which gives subject direction.

B.   Empowerment

- through direction and focus.

A.   Leadership.

that someone has to offer, but there is underneath all of that no matter what style you still are looking for movement forward, acceptance by a group and I think that translates to a consensus you know in order to move forward you just, it seems to me to be that the transient the movement towards acceptance throughout organisations is that a traditional hierarchical style isn't necessarily what has to happen. My own background is a fair amount of time in the military and the contrast has been quite dramatic. I think I find this to be the single most valuable tenet I think to bring forth at whatever level you are involved in an organisation and again I think it was a piece that was missing in the education I had and am convinced that more of this comes from experience of personal values than anything else. I got very little if anything out of a business school type experience to help with this - I got a great deal out of experiences before that where even in the hierarchical structure of the military at least you were dealing with like groups of people and you tried to figure out what makes them tick as you were trying to figure out yourself during those years, so I think that type of emphasis is now coming to the forefront as purposeful but it isn't as if everyone didn't already know that to some extent work to that purpose. We all have heard and know during our various careers of times when a key decision was being made but the feeling and the hesitance which may not even have been said was well what about this group, but personally I think we don't thin they're going to like that and you would have decisions that were made either around that person or through them or over them as

B.   Challenge - to accepted practices relates to own past experiences in the military organization.

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the way to deal with it and it seems to be I welcome it more and more as a sense of let's just look to the idea of a compromise, let's look to the value of getting the best that each has to offer to this and there might even be some good ideas to put together from different sources that would make better decisions, but more importantly they would make a decision that we all agree on so this type of participation has been to our mind the most satisfying of recent years and I like to think it matches up with most people's values so you don't really have to contradict even the strong boss doesn't have to do much to embrace this type of approach, doesn't have to compromise his position that much if he feels that he needs to have that decisive stronger position could be entirely appropriate. That's the kind of emphasis....

AAH Could I ask one final question - if we look up and down these reasons here of value and looking forward into the future for new ideas that might be coming up, what does a management idea have to be for it to be judged by you as something valuable, i.e. looking back retrospectively thinking of the ones that you have come across and what is it about them that recurs if you like in all of them and therefore would have to be a feature of a future one for you to say well let's just stop and have a think about it, let's read about it?

E Well, the first thing that comes to mind and maybe doesn't answer that directly but its the first thing that comes to mind when you say that is the idea comes along at the right time and maybe that's

B.   Correspondence.

B.   Timeliness.

more a function of .... of a manager, where he is, how receptive he is, how much experience he has had and how he can make sense of things and that's a common situation with any learning is where it comes along and makes a bigger difference and I think back to some of these things that perhaps we touched upon in a formal environment in my own activity just wasn't there, formal training I mean - MBA type of training - so I guess that's probably part of it, but what should be there in the future?

I guess what characterises most of these things is objectivity and receptiveness to other ideas. That usually runs counter to a characteristic that many managers have which would be some level of reasonably strong self-confidence and some it's just an overwhelming ego, but it has the place and many times you need the objectivity to be able to suppress that so that you can take a look at these other things that are coming at you and accept them and involve them with ideas coming from subordinates or messages coming from competition or the market place or whatever. That would seem to be a common theme I guess that anything that if I was to look at concepts in the future that would make sense to me it would be the whole idea that they would be based around dropping some barriers, opening yourself up, letting yourself take a look at a few things in spite of the preconceived notions that you might have, history you might of how things should work.

AAH Those are the two main ...

E I would say so.

- elaboration of the notion of timeliness vis-a-vis individual (specified individual receptivity, past experience, sense-making processes).

B. Challenge - overcoming self-confidence (personal prejudice?) to allow new ideas to be considered irrespective of their source.

B. Challenge.

AAH ... it's really you explaining to me rather than me trying to force my views upon you which is what tends to happen.

H   The first one there then creating a committed workforce was of great appeal to me as always been very slim narrow volumes rather than huge bulky bible type of things, so this was a very small one which gave multiple case studies between the past and present experiences of other companies about a committed workforce before and after. I saw for me there was some relevance to our whole change, our whole vision process and so many of the things we do and also harmonise with what I believe we started off with in the company with the two aims, two values of our founder and you'll hear perhaps references personnel policy 101. The guy must have been very far-sighted indeed to have come up with that all those years ago and today we still talk about those things. But in there it also gave you some comments about future leaders, what the criteria might be in terms of the facilitator/counsellor and so on and so forth. A kind of harmonise with my own thinking, harmonise with the way I like to think I do business and sometimes it comes as a surprise to me that the modern day thinking doesn't look to me terribly modern, it looks terribly old. Now if it's as obvious as that ....Peters might say then more people would be doing it so it can't be that obvious, but I find it just a bit peculiar.

I've got here .... theory Z. This was something I came across many years ago when I was looking at the quality angle customer suppliers and who was doing the writings. There was Deming of

A.   Authorization - credibility assessed on the described experiences of other companies.

B.   Correspondence - of idea with company culture (of present) and vision (of the future).

A.   Leadership.

B.   Correspondence - idea fits in with own views and beliefs.

2.

course, there was Duran and all these folks who are very topical today, but you hear guys talking about theory X and theory Y and that sort of tickles things out of me, and of course there was many comparisons with the way Japanese and the Japanese culture and the myths that I think were created around that time. The Japanese was the way to do it, but this guy Ouchi??? compared theory A the American way, theory J the Japanese way and sort of says well here is theory Z in terms of culture and how to change that culture and what these might be in the future. I found that fascinating, but again it was compatible with the way I like to think I'm doing business and it was people-centred. The success is going to be through people and I believe that right from the .... of my background, so understanding and meeting that was pretty important to me.

Now this whole stimulus might have come around I've got integrated management of quality and that was a home spun if you will, our Quality Director or Vice President at that time, surveyed the world and like a simultaneous hit between what others were doing at that time he had listened to Figenbaum and Crosby, Duran, Deming, had been to their workshops and so on and came and said for the company this is the way forward. Now that stimulated me because I was in the quality business at that time and I guess I read it until I was exhausted the Demings, the Durans, the customer/supplier relationship - in fact we were even doing it in here in the film side of the business, but we seemed to

B. Correspondence - with personal preferred approach.

A. Individual perspective.

A. Legitimation - going beyond correspondence 'new thinking' experienced as validating subjects' long-well views. Such confirmation enhances his self-esteem.

A. Timeliness - of idea.

lose our way some way in this - I don't quite figure it but it was a tremendous experience and today we talk about total quality management in other acronyms but this guy that came along in the company sense he was the guy who started it off for me and indeed if I look at total quality management and read his IMQ philosophy then we have ...... but you do have to have the supplementary reading of that, so that was quite important and again like theory Z and the committed workforce and the IMQ the bottom line is people and I find that important as well.

Maybe somewhere in between all of that I was introduced to a book, now what was the title of it, one day Andrew Foggo came along and said I've got a book you might be interested in because a lot of the stuff that you talk about and say is articulated much better than you would do it, it's in this book and it's part of my compulsive reading for the MBA, it ways Hayes and Wheelright, *Restoring our Competitive Edge* or something like that and again that was all about the cause and it was all of that put together in a rather nice way so that stimulated me again so it's been continuous reading all the way - I'm fascinated by all of that stuff, organisational behaviour is so topical here today and it's the way we're trying to do it, but it's like a leap back in time also, I've been around for a long time say gee this is the way we used to do it, but it's interesting, very interesting, so these are very top level hits at that.

AAH   That was the one you just mentioned?

H   That was competing through manufacturing.

B.   Empowerment through the provision of direction ("this is the way forward" replaced "lost way").

A.   Individualistic perspective.

B.   Integration - disparate thoughts and ideas held by the subject "put together in a nice way".

A.   Timeliness.

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AAH Let me ask you the question then, what, in column 3 here I've, it says reasons why idea, I found valuable, I would you to just pause and reflect on the answers you've given to those things, I've used the word valuable in an ambiguous sense because different managers will find different things valuable. If I was to try to develop a management idea in the future, what kind of characteristics, what aspects should it contain for you to say - ah it's a valuable idea for me, based on what you've found?

H When I reflect on that what I see in the first one is confirmation and I find that valuable to know that you ain't loopy or you're ain't too holistic or whatever, that it's really saying the future leaders will look that way because it harmonises with my thinking. That's too light, that's not good enough, but it's kind of in that area. On theory Z meeting the Japanese challenge, well what is this Japanese challenge, what is it all about, how do they think, what is their culture reveal? And that gave me a heightened awareness of what the Japanese challenge was in terms of their culture, their organisational strength. There are certain items in there that touched on leadership, again it goes back to number one there that the committed workforce one, what those leaders should be in the future. There's a common thread in there for me. There was more than confirmation - it was like saying yeah even the Japanese they all do it this way, the American one I could identify with.

The IMQ what was important about that, well it was a whole new way of thinking as far as I was concerned relating, if you look at a

B. Legitimation - confirmation of the rightness/value of subject's ideas and thus of himself.

B. Correspondence - fits in subject's world view of how things ought to be.

B. Correspondence - being able to relate to certain ideas.

B. Revelation - figure/ground reversal which re-focuses subject's framework.

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competitive advantage and using quality as the theme, then it is multi-facetted in that it was the business, it was the people, it was the external suppliers, it was the internal suppliers and so on and so forth that to me was quite big, and at the same time having read Deming and Duran and their works it was again confirmation that this was indeed the way forward, and I guess if you look at the dates on some of these things you're talking about the 50s and you say hold a wee minute, this isn't new, what about this challenge over here. They seemed to listen and the rest didn't in some way.

That was the Harvard Business School the last one, competing through manufacturing. Small business unit concepts in terms of marketing, finance, sales and so on kind of gave me more focus, it gave me more focus on what a small business unit was and what was your competitive advantage and caused me to think, so that's those ones.

B. Revelation - notion of 'confirmation' used this time not as confirming subject's preconceived views, but as recognising that acceptance of these ideas meant automatic rejection of all others.

B. Empowers - by directing subject's attention from the unimportant to the important.