Achieving excellence through people and productivity

Management Services

Mobile-Money and Microcredit as Routes Out of Poverty
The Institute of Management Services is the primary body in the UK concerned with the promotion, practice and development of the range of methodologies and techniques for the improvement of productivity and quality, known collectively as ‘Management Services’. This embraces the disciplines of industrial engineering, work study, organisation and methods, systems analysis, and a wide range of management information and control techniques as illustrated in our Body of Knowledge.

The Institute acts as the qualifying body for the Management Services profession in the UK, focusing developments in practice and knowledge and acting as a forum for information exchange. This in turn enables our members who work under a variety of job titles across the whole of the UK economy, to make a more effective contribution to the wellbeing of their own organisation and to the nation’s economy as a whole.

In addition to creating and upholding professional standards for the practice of management services through the adoption of a code of ethics and the provision of a system of qualifying examinations, the Institute of Management Services collaborates with national and international professional bodies in similar fields.

The Institute is a member of, or represented on, a number of other bodies including the World Confederation of Productivity Science, the European Federation of Productivity Services, and the European Institute of Industrial Engineers.

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In this issue of Management Services…

Cover Story

In this month’s cover article, Cliff Moyce describes the history, methods and successes of microcredit and mobile-money, examines why banks have failed with the same methods, and argues for a change of focus and approach by the World Bank if it is serious about alleviating poverty. Read more on page 21.

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In my last Chairman’s column I emphasised that 2021 would be a year of uncertainty, with many unknowns. Who would have anticipated the challenges that we would encounter with the new variants of the Coronavirus and the resultant restrictions? It seems that whenever there is a hint of progress in this pandemic, another problem halts us in our tracks. Nevertheless, ensuring that our plans are flexible enough to cope, and with the necessary determination, willpower and resolve, we will eventually succeed. As they say, ‘where there’s a will, there’s a way’. Here are a few examples.

The development of the Coronavirus vaccines in 10 months as opposed to 10 years, was nothing short of astounding. If ever there was an example of, ‘where there’s a will, there’s a way’, then this must be it. So how was it done?

It is fair to say that the scientists who developed the vaccines were not starting from scratch. Significant experience had been gained from the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) epidemic in 2002 and the emergence of MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) in 2012. As a consequence of these experiences, scientists realised that it was only a matter of time before a new virus would emerge and were already working on vaccines in preparation. However, this does not detract from the speed of development of the new vaccines which was down to a number of factors: Funding (an unprecedented amount of funds were made available at every stage of development); collaboration (scientists from across the world shared research data and results); manufacturers (they were encouraged to produce and stockpile doses of the vaccine before the vaccine was proven to work – accepting the financial risk that went with this approach); parallel running (in respect of multiple development streams and, of course, rigorous trials during and after development until the vaccine was shown to be clinically safe). As Dr Michael Parry, the Chair of Infectious Diseases at Stamford Health, Stamford Connecticut, said, “Amid a global pandemic, time is a luxury the world cannot afford”. In other words, time is of the essence, which created the ‘will’ and, as a result, a ‘way’ was found!

Another example was demonstrated in the Brexit trade talks. I was intrigued by the whole negotiation process and more specifically, the tactics of ‘brinkmanship’. As productivity practitioners we have all encountered this during our careers and it certainly seems to have prevailed during the trade talks. In fact, final agreement was not reached until the 11th hour and, although many are not happy with some of the terms, all concede that an agreement is in the best interests of both the UK and the EU.

In terms of the UK’s negotiating stance, Rafael Behr, columnist at The Guardian, put it this way, ‘Johnson’s technique for dealing with problems is to let them run out of control, building to a point of sufficient crisis that delay is no longer viable. That way the choice becomes perversely easier, because there are fewer options left. Wait long enough and there may only be one. That is how he has dealt with Brexit. He imagines that brinkmanship is a negotiating strategy to wring out concessions from Brussels, but in reality it is just a way to simplify the decision by eliminating options that take time to develop’.

Whether you agree or disagree with Rafael Behr’s observations, the fact that an agreement was reached is another example of ‘where there’s a will, there’s a way’.

My last example is a bit closer to home. It relates to the administration of the Institute, and the willingness and determination of a handful of Council members to keep things ticking over. Despite losing our administration manager in March of last year, which coincided with the first Coronavirus lockdown, we have managed to keep things going, which has been no mean task. No one ever anticipated that we would still be working from home well into this new year. Unfortunately, however, we are all well aware that 12 months on, little has changed. No one ever anticipated that we would still be working from home well into this new year.

I cannot emphasise enough, the amount of hard work that has had to be done by my colleagues on Council – well and above the normal call of duty. As Chairman, may I on your behalf, thank these guys for their willingness and sustained efforts to keep the Institute functioning and, not only functioning, but functioning well. Another example of ‘where there’s a will, there’s a way’.

Finally, can I ask you all to please continue to take care and stay safe. Hopefully, it won’t be too long before everyone has received their vaccination and we can get back to some form of normality, whatever that new normality looks like!

Dr Andrew Muir
Chairman

I cannot emphasise enough, the amount of hard work that has had to be done by my colleagues on Council.
Institute News

Obituaries

Dr William J McCourt FMS

It is with sadness that we report the death of Dr William McCourt FMS at the age of 90. Bill first joined the Institute on 30 March 1961 and was responsible for founding the Institute of Management Services (IMS) Northern Ireland Branch.

He was a popular and highly regarded business figure in Northern Ireland, and did much to enhance and project the Institute’s image with his work on behalf of the Institute’s branch in Northern Ireland.

William was born in New York but came to Northern Ireland with his family aged nine and was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution.

His first job was with the York Street Flax Spinning Company, and he later moved to the textile company Lindustries, as Head of Industrial Engineering. In 1966, he joined Rolls-Royce in Belfast as Head of Administration, helping to establish the factory and later becoming General Manager.

He played a significant role in the business community, not only with the Institute of Management Services, but as a committee member of the British Institute of Management and the Belfast Chamber of Commerce, and as a Council member and Chairman of the local CBI in 1990 and 1991.

He was on the board of the NI Economic Council and a member of the Council of the University of Ulster, which awarded him an honorary DSc in 1989. He was also on the regional committee of the National Trust, and a past-President of the NI Industrial Development Board Partnership.

William made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Institute over so many years and will be sadly missed. Our sincere condolences go to his wife Joan and his children Dee and Roger.

Bob Smith FMS

It is with great sadness that I have to report the passing of Bob Smith FMS. A dear friend, work colleague and golfing partner.

A member of the Institute for more than 50 years, Bob was an ambassador for the IMS and a stalwart of the Scottish Region. He held every position at Region board level, latterly as Chairman, before he had to stand down due ill health.

Suffering from Alzheimer’s, Bob spent his final year in a nursing home where he was extremely well cared for, which was comforting for his family and friends who were restricted from visiting him due to the Coronavirus lockdown.

Bob would have been 83 on 1 April this year. He lived a full and successful life and was involved in many community activities: a scout leader, a founder member of Balbirnie Park Golf Club and match secretary. He was also Treasurer of the Association of Professional Institutes (Fife) which, when disbanded, donated the remainder of their funds (£1397.55) to Alzheimer’s Scotland in Bob’s name, in recognition of all the work he had done for the Association over many years.

Bob is survived by his two daughters Annette and Lynne and their children. He will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.
Institute's CPD Programme

If Institute members are seeking to enhance their career prospects, they should consider continuing professional development (CPD) which is used by many professionals to develop new skills and knowledge throughout their career. CPD has become crucial in terms of career progression.

CPD is a proactive and conscious form of learning which uses various methods to help individuals either learn new skills or develop existing ones.

As the name suggests, it is an ongoing learning process. It is also a self-driven form of learning, with the individual deciding their own additional training needs. Participation in CPD offers numerous benefits to both the individual and their employer. For you as a professional, it helps to ensure your skills and knowledge are up to date, and the professional standard of your Institute registrations and qualifications are maintained. For your employer, it ensures that the company standards are both high and consistent.

Your employer will see that you are actively dedicated to the job role and value your commitment to the role. Whether you’re looking for a promotion, or you’re hoping to gain employment with a prestigious company, CPD can really help. It enables you to stand out from the crowd, with research showing that those who have undertaken CPD, have a significantly higher chance of gaining a promotion or moving on to a different area within their chosen field. Practically anything which can further your knowledge and skills is classed as CPD.

Details of the Institute’s continuing professional development (CPD) programme can be found on the website www.ims-productivity.com by clicking on the home page ‘Education’ tab then clicking on CPD tab on drop down menu.

Institute Elections

In 2021 elections to the Institute’s Council of Management will take place to fill four vacancies on the Institute’s Council. Those elected will serve for a period of four years.

On page 8 of this Journal you will find the official notice seeking nominations from corporate members of the Institute who wish to stand in the election.

Candidates need to have the following qualities and skills and be prepared to play an active role in the management of the Institute.

- Make an active contribution and have intelligent thinking skills.
- Have the capacity and capability to take on some workload.
- Have a clear desire to actively contribute and influence.
- Possess practical skillsets/mindsets that demonstrate commercial skills.
- A willingness to play an active role in the management of the Institute.
- Possess the necessary business skills to make a positive contribution.

Please give active consideration to standing for election and using your skills and knowledge to benefit the Institute. If you require further information please email admin@ims-productivity.com and arrange to speak to an existing Council member.

Institute Notice

Institute members are advised that during the Coronavirus pandemic, the Institute has taken the decision to close its Lichfield office until the government advise it is safe to resume normal activities.

If required, members may still contact the Institute by either email at admin@ims-productivity.com or by telephone on 07917 031 866.
Innovate and Collaborate!

Institute of Management Services President calls upon business leaders to innovate, collaborate and partner, in the building of a more sustainable and socially responsible future.

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating a global requirement and opportunity for innovation, repurposing and welcome changes of direction according to Professor Colin Coulson-Thomas, the Institute’s President. While presenting the scene setting keynote during the inaugural session of the 11th annual CSR (Corporate Sustainability & Responsibility) Leadership Summit, the author of Winning Companies; Winning People called upon the CSR community to play a catalytic role in ensuring more socially and environmentally responsible outcomes.

The IMS President stressed the importance of shared purpose, agility, flexibility, cohesion, trust, and responsible and caring leadership. In the current situation, he emphasised the importance of resilience, “We need individual, family, organisational, community, network and social resilience. Resilience is about coping, responding and rebounding, but in relation to COVID-19 we should not return to where we were before the pandemic. The cost in terms of environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, use of finite natural capital, and contribution to global warming and climate change would be too high.”

The Professor questioned CSR Leadership Summit attendees on the first day of the three day event, “Were previous activities and lifestyles sustainable? Can we turn adversity and tragedy into an opportunity to move towards a more sustainable future? Should we look beyond a ‘new normal’? Can we evolve, transition and transform to a more sustainable and inclusive model of development that is less environmentally damaging? We need innovation – social innovation as well as business and economic innovation.”

He argued, “We must create and adopt simpler, healthier and less stressful lifestyles that safeguard natural capital. Crises like the COVID-19 pandemic can create a common and shared exposure to risk, threat, pressure and stress, that can encourage people to come together. Cohesion and consensus are important for holding people together, but we don’t want a dull uniformity. As well as a collective effort, we need individual initiative, inspiration and imagination. We need diversity, challenge and questioning. We require experimentation and exploration if we are to bounce back to a better place.”

Coulson-Thomas also emphasised the need for socially responsible innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship, “The CSR community should build socially responsible innovation into the purposes, visions, values, goals and objectives of organisations. Remember your CSR roots; the ancient wisdom of India and our responsibilities to future generations. Living in harmony with the natural world can offer hope and shine lights into dark places. Collaboration and partnership are needed for sustainable social development. Together let’s build a sustainable and socially responsible future.”

The three day 11th CSR Leadership Summit 2021 was organised by the India CSR network. Professor Colin Coulson-Thomas has held public appointments at local, regional and national level and professorial appointments in Europe, North and South America, Africa, the Middle East, India and China. He is a fellow of seven chartered bodies and the World Academy of Productivity Science and an Honoured Fellow of the Institute for Responsible Leadership. For more information about the IMS President, visit https://www.adaptation.ltd
To All Corporate Members

Elections to Council of Management

At the Annual General Meeting to be held in 2021 the following members of the Institute’s Council of Management will retire. They are, however, all eligible for re-election:

Andrew Muir     Richard Taylor

Nominations for the vacancies so caused may be made by submission to me at 206 Bescar Lane, Scarisbrick, Ormskirk L40 9QT not later than 5pm on Thursday 22 April 2021 on the nomination form. Will you please note that the nominee must be a corporate member of the Institute and be nominated by two other corporate members. Nominees must sign the undertaking to accept office if elected and provide details of themselves which may appear on the ballot paper.

In the event of the number of nominations exceeding the number of vacancies, ballot papers will be available for Corporate Members by email request to admin@ims-productivity.com from the Institutes Head Office on Wednesday 16 June 2021. The closing date for receipt of voting papers will be 1 August 2021 and the results of the election will be declared at the 2021 Annual General Meeting. An acknowledgement will be sent to the nominees as soon as the form is received.

The following notes outline the general duties and responsibilities of a Council member:

The Institute is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by the provisions of the Companies Acts. Its Memorandum and Articles of Association specify what it may do and how it should conduct its affairs. The business of the Institute is managed by the Council of Management who may do anything within the Memorandum and Articles of Association which is not contrary to any statute or is not required to be done by members in general meeting. This responsibility is a collective one and Council normally act through Council meetings. Council may of course delegate to individual Council Members, but it has the final responsibility.

Council members are in a fiduciary relationship to the Institute and must exercise their powers for its benefit using reasonable diligence and care. They are required to take proper account of the interests of the Institute, as well as its members. They act as agents of the Institute and only become personally liable if they authorise any act or expenditure outside the Constitution. They may not receive any remuneration or benefit as Council members except out-of-pocket expenses; this includes benefit of any contract with the Institute by a company of which they own 100th of the share capital or more.

Apart from presenting annual reports and accounts and appointing certain officers, the Memorandum and Articles of Association lay no specific duties on the Council. Its responsibility is a general one of running the affairs of the business. Any individual responsibility springs from authority given by the Council and this will clearly vary from time to time. Council members are expected to serve a four-year term of office and to attend all Council meetings (normally three each year). To assume responsibility for at least one area of Institute administration and management.

David Blanchflower
Secretary

Note: Candidates must enclose a good quality photograph of themselves and up to 50 words indicating why they wish to be elected to Council. This, together with the photo, will be published in the Summer Journal and on the Institute website. Candidates must also provide a maximum of 150 words giving details of their skills and business knowledge, industrial/public service/professional experience relating to Management Services and/or past service to the Institute which will appear on the ballot form. If necessary, please add an additional sheet to accommodate your details.
**Elections to Council of Management**

To All Corporate Members

1 March 2021

Lichfield Business Village, Staffordshire University Centre, Friary Way, Lichfield WS13 6QG

Candidates must also provide a maximum of 150 words giving details of their skills and business knowledge, industrial/public service and/or professional experience relating to Management Services and/or past service to the Institute which will appear on the ballot paper. This, together with the photo, will be published in the Summer Journal and on the Institute website.

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In the event of the number of nominations exceeding the number of vacancies, ballot papers will be available for Corporate members. Nominees must sign the undertaking to accept office if elected and provide details of themselves which may appear on the ballot paper.

Nomination for Council of Management

Closing Date for nominations 5.00pm Thursday 22 April 2021

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Current office(s) in the Institute

Why I wish to be elected to Council (50 words max.)

Business skills, Industrial/Public Service/Professional experience relating to Management Services and/or service to the Institute. (150 words max.- words in excess of 150 will be deleted)

I hereby agree to serve on Council should I be elected thereto, The details given about Myself are true and correct in all respects.

Signature:  
Date:  

NOMINATED BY

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According to a report by the independent thinktank Autonomy, working a four-day week on full pay is a perfectly viable way of tackling the UK’s relative lack of productivity, and improving health and wellbeing among employees.

The report analysed profitability statistics from more than 50,000 UK firms and used hypothetical scenarios to gauge the impact of an imposition of a four-day week. It found that a four-day week was affordable for most firms of over 50 employees.

The Day After Tomorrow report suggested that under a best-case scenario, a reduction in hours would be entirely offset by increases in productivity and price increases. It also promoted the idea that even under a worst-case scenario, a four-day week with no loss of pay would be affordable for most firms once the initial phase of the COVID-19 crisis had passed. Industries with high labour costs could experience cashflow problems if the four-day week were implemented too rapidly, it said.

The full report can be read at https://autonomy.work/portfolio/dat

No-one could have predicted the COVID-19 pandemic and what it has brought about, and the way it has made shifting to remote work necessary and pervasive, it is clear remote work is here to stay for many. As a result, business leaders who may have never considered allowing employees to work from home, must now evolve their thinking about what it means to be productive, and how to measure and manage productivity from remote locations.

Before COVID-19 forced a rapid shift toward remote work, many organisations were either sceptical of or even hostile to employees who wanted to work from home, due to concerns about employee productivity.

A survey in 2019 on remote working, found 42% of managers listed monitoring remote employee productivity as a top challenge, outpacing concerns around communication and interpersonal connection. At the time of that survey, about 20% of workforce in America worked remotely at least some of the time. Today some 42% of the workforce in America is working from home full-time, with many business leaders considering making remote working permanent in some form after the pandemic subsides.

A new study from The Entrepreneurs Network’s Head of Innovation Research Dr Anton Howes, identifies the opportunities for modernising UK copyright law now that the UK is outside the European Union.

The study paper examines the ever-increasing role of copyright in affecting UK creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation. Unlike other intellectual property rights, copyrighted works enjoy extraordinary privileges. Copyright is awarded automatically, from the moment that creation is fixed, and whether a work qualifies for copyright protections is only put to the test if challenged in court. It is also protected for much longer durations – usually for generations after the death of creators – and infringement can in some cases be a criminal offence.

The paper sets out seven key reforms that would create a world-leading copyright system that incentivises creativity, while responding to the opportunities and risks posed by new technologies.

The full study report can be read at https://bit.ly/3b8bR9S
Wondering how to reduce costs, increase capacity or improve response?

For help to address your productivity challenges, why not involve Scott-Grant. Our independent, objective and cost-effective help is valued in every business sector.

At Scott-Grant you’re at the home of knowledge and expertise in improving productivity.

Email us at productivity@scott-grant.co.uk
Find out more on www.scott-grant.co.uk

Volkswagen Looks to the Cloud for Productivity Gains

In 2020 Volkswagen introduced its Volkswagen’s Industrial Cloud initiative to digitalise its production and logistics operations. The Industrial Cloud is an IT industrial platform, designed to gather and analyse data from all connected Volkswagen Group facilities on a real-time basis, to help increase efficiency and productivity. The scope of this project is planned to reach across Volkswagen’s global supply chain, including more than 30,000 locations of its more than 1500 suppliers and partner companies.

A key facet of this project is its focus on the development of apps, available in a private company ‘app store’, that can be accessed by all VW plants for downloading and implementation in production and logistics operations. Essentially, this initiative is a way to streamline best practice adoption across all of VW’s global plants, as well as streamline technology development with its partners.

Since the initial report in 2020 on the Volkswagen’s Industrial Cloud initiative, the company has announced plans to connect its plants in Chattanooga, Tennessee and Puebla and Silao, Mexico, to this project. These plants would be the first plants outside Europe to be networked to the Industrial Cloud.

Remote Working is Here to Stay

Most organisations worldwide have witnessed strong productivity gains in third quarter of 2020, brought about by allowing employees to work remotely; however, employees are being impacted by the feeling of being ‘always-on’, according to a new report by the Capgemini Research Institute.

The report, The future of work: from remote to hybrid, found that employee productivity grew at 63% of organisations during the third quarter of 2020, due to less commuting time, flexible work schedules and the adoption of effective virtual collaboration tools. The report surveyed executives from 500 organisations covering a range of sectors globally and 5000 employees.

While employee productivity has gone up, employees have expressed concerns about remote working in the long-term. More than 56% feel apprehensive of the expectations of being ‘always on’, and younger workers need more support to deal with the stress associated with uncertainty, as this statistic rises to 60% of employees between the ages of 26-35. These concerns raise questions about whether productivity gains can be sustained in the long-term for a successful hybrid working model.

IT and digital functions (68%) lead the way in productivity, followed by customer service (60%) and sales and marketing (59%). Digitisation and the use of technologies like AI, has helped organisations to see improved productivity in these areas.


The Volkswagen Group has already networked 18 European plants with the Industrial Cloud. Its three Volkswagen locations in North America are expected to be connected by the end of 2021.

“This is a big and critical step for our digital transformation as we work to apply the knowledge gained from one of the largest vehicle production networks in the world, to our facilities in the US and Mexico,” said Johan de Nysschen, COO, Volkswagen Group of America.
UN labour estimates show that COVID has led to ‘massive’ income and productivity losses, and that the job losses or reduced working hours have cost the world the equivalent of 255 million jobs in 2020.

The report, from the UN International Labour Organization (ILO) in January, said that the losses were nearly four times the number lost during the 2009 global financial crisis.

While there is still a high degree of uncertainty for 2021, the ILO estimates projected that most countries could see a relatively strong recovery in the second half the year, as COVID-19 vaccination programmes take effect.

ILO put forward three scenarios: a baseline estimate showing a 3% decline; a pessimistic forecast indicating a 4.6% loss; and in the most optimistic scenario, a 1.3% decrease in working hours through this year.

“The signs of recovery we see are encouraging, but they are fragile and highly uncertain, and we must remember that no country or group can recover alone,” Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General said.

“We are at a fork in the road. One path leads to an uneven, unsustainable, recovery with growing inequality and instability, and the prospect of more crises. The other focuses on a human-centred recovery for building back better, prioritising employment, income and social protection, workers’ rights and social dialogue”, he added.

“If we want a lasting, sustainable and inclusive recovery, this is the path policymakers must commit to.”


Reskilling China

McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) has produced a report that assesses China’s education and training system today with an economic lens and a particular focus on the development of skills.

After decades of reform, China today has an education system that serves the industrial economy well, although gaps in access, quality and relevance in education still need to be addressed.

However, China now has a larger challenge to meet in delivering the skills needed for a modern, digital, industrial economy, while instilling a new national ethos of lifelong learning, and ensuring that the system is equitable. Nothing less than a transformation of China’s education and skills-development system appears necessary. China has undertaken transformative reform before; it now needs to do so again.

Around the world, work is changing as digitisation and automation spread, and many millions of people will need to raise and refresh their skills, and some to change occupations. Because of China’s sheer scale, an estimated up to one-third of the global occupational transitions needed for the future of work may be in China. If China gets this right, best practices and models could offer a helpful reference point to other economies.

The full report can be seen at: Reskilling-China-Transforming-the-worlds-largest-workforce-into-lifelong-learners-Report-FINAL.pdf (mckinsey.com)
Title: Working From Home  
Author: Karen Mangia  
Publisher: John Wiley & Sons (2020)  
Pages: 176

We knew virtual workplaces were coming in the future, but we did not think they would come so soon. However, COVID-19 has also effectively imposed home working on vast numbers of UK residents. This book is a useful guide written to assist those new to home working.

Many of us not accustomed to home working, have come to recognise the value of virtual meetings. In her book, the author has shared with the reader numerous techniques to help in practical areas, such as how to create great video meetings, looking at the structure of these meetings, how to moderate them and ensure that all participants have the opportunity to fully contribute. It is stressed that virtual meeting preparation is essential.

The book covers all aspects of home working and its implications, such as how it will impact on our careers. It poses such questions as will our employers remember we exist and who we are? How can we get noticed from a distance? What does it mean to lead and inspire a team that never meets face-to-face? These are pressing questions and are covered in the book.

Offices are carefully planned work environments that emphasise and focus on productivity. When we shift to remote roles, not only do we lose the benefit of meeting in person, but we also lose that emphasis and find ourselves isolated in spaces that might invite us to distraction. The first step to successfully working from home is to create an environment where you will thrive professionally. This book provides readers with sound advice on how to set up a virtual office, claim that work-from-home space, and begin remotely connecting with colleagues on a regular schedule whilst also being productive.

With the current need for national governments to impose lockdowns and insist that as many people as possible work from home to combat COVID-19, home working has become the norm. This is a concise book, in which the author has put together easy-to-follow frameworks for getting much more out of our home working experience, so making this book a trusted guide.

The reader will acquire key learning skills about how to avoid pitfalls and how to maximise their efficiency and productivity whilst working from home. Working From Home is both an inspirational and motivating read.

Title: Virtual Meetings & Remote Work  
Author: Rohit Bhargava  
Publisher: Ideapress Publishing (June 2020)  
Pages: 172

This book was written during the COVID-19 pandemic and explores virtual meetings, and how we can collaborate effectively with people we have never met in real life. It includes contributions from more than 50 top experts, whilst exploring the five secrets of delivering a compelling virtual presentation.

Most guides to virtual work try to give the impression that virtual is better than being face-to-face, but in most instances it is not. However, in today’s business world the COVID-19 pandemic has forced upon businesses, the necessity to work remotely and to participate in virtual meetings.

There are many reasons you may need to work remotely or attend virtual meetings, from taking parental leave to navigating a global health pandemic. In this book, the author has compiled best advice from all industries that will enable you to be effective and productive.

Working from home has many distractions that can impede our efficiency. This book will assist the reader in being able to concentrate and stay on task even with distractions and the inevitable chaos that can exist at home. It is formatted in a clear, simple way with short readable chapters.

This book was written by the author Rohit Bhargava in record time to respond to the needs of the situation, and the requirement for home working and virtual meetings brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The author has clearly undertaken extensive research on the latest technologies and best practices for working virtually. In addition, he corralled the advice of top experts who have been conducting business virtually for decades. This is a most timely and useful book, and whether you need to deliver a presentation to a virtual audience or collaborate with a global team, or are having to work from home this handy guide will help you be more productive.

This is a truly relevant publication that will help the reader navigate and self-manage expectations during these difficult and unusual times.
Success is Always Worth Celebrating

IMS Student of the Year 2020.

The annual event to celebrate the IMS Student of the Year took place in February, this time without the physical presence of the winning students and their managers at the Scott-Grant training centre in Manchester. Instead, because of the COVID restrictions a virtual presentation was held, managed on behalf of the Institute by Managing Director Richard Taylor.

In his opening remarks, Richard observed how delegates during 2020 had come from a range of sectors, despite the postponement of a number of courses for a few months: major supermarkets, online channels, distribution centres, government agencies, mail and parcels, automotive, aerospace, food, furniture, engineering, electronics, garments, PPE, refrigeration and trade unions.

“It has been a disruptive year for everyone but in the months we were able to deliver training either in our newly refitted rooms or in-company, there was still convincing evidence that the need for the course content of the IMS Certificate is valued and appreciated in all industrial and commercial organisations, with little exception. It is always worth celebrating success and this year, maybe more than others, it is especially important.”

It was a pleasure to welcome the winner and three runners-up along with their respective managers via the online ClickMeeting facility. Scott-Grant senior instructors, Steve Heathcote and Ian Winstanley, were also there to make the presentations, though Steve Royle was away delivering IMS modules at an in-company location. All the framed certificates and gifts were later sent off to the winners.

Hugh Wright: Tesco
The IMS Student of the Year for 2020 is Hugh Wright from Tesco Stores Ltd. After graduating in Business Management in 2018, Hugh had joined Tesco’s productivity team in a support role before being recruited to the Industrial Engineering department. “I thoroughly enjoyed the four week course; I think my favourite module was the third week studying method and process improvement which makes you think in a more structured and logical way – that really appealed to me. We
process map all the routines in the stores," Hugh said. Now a Retail Industrial Engineer, Hugh is booked on the next MOST® course with Scott-Grant and is looking forward to learning again with people from different business sectors. His manager, Lead Industrial Engineer Keith Robbins, was delighted at Hugh's success – though not surprised. He reflected, "Hugh applied himself totally to the course content and he related to it very well. When I recruited him a year or so ago, his potential for success was quite evident.” Instructor Steve Heathcote presented Hugh with a certificate and cheque from the Institute, along with their specially engraved glass award, and with a certificate and gift from Scott-Grant.

Jack White: Nissan
After four years studying for a degree in Mechanical Engineering, graduate Jack White joined Nissan Manufacturing UK Limited in the North East, initially on the shop floor for three months before applying for an industrial engineering role. “This is right up my street. I'm a numbers person and I'm tailored to being efficient so I particularly enjoyed the Certificate course and the learning experience that Steve Heathcote gave. Fortunately I've got lots of experienced colleagues around me so I'm well supported and my work is very enjoyable.” His manager, Senior IE George Addicott commented, “We could see Jack’s potential when he was considered for the IE role so we were quick to snap him up. It’s great that he’s keeping up the tradition of representing Nissan in the winners’ line-up!”

Conor O’Neill: Valuation Office Agency
Another runner-up is politics graduate Conor O’Neill, who joined the government agency two years ago in an administrative role before being recruited by Andrew Hurdley to join the Cost Analyst team. This necessitated studying for the IMS Certificate which Conor found very enlightening. “I slipped back easily into learning mode and very much enjoyed the four weeks. Steve Royle was my instructor and he was excellent. I look forward to applying everything I learned,” he said.

Nabila Hussain: Harrison Spinks
The luxury bed manufacturer, Harrison Spinks, recruited Nabila Hussain a year ago to join the company’s IE department and she immediately came to Scott-Grant to study for the IMS Certificate which, as a runner up to the Student of the Year, shows she passed with flying colours. Presenting her certificate, instructor Ian Winstanley expressed his delight at her success, “I hope this proves that your own doubt was unfounded and you can enjoy your success.” Nabila’s new line manager, Dave Garbett was himself delighted. “I’ve had her reporting to me for just two weeks and already we’re winning awards!” he beamed.

An additional cause for celebration
Richard Taylor said that the standard of the four winning students was as high as any previous year, so they were all to be acknowledged and congratulated for their significant achievement. He then turned his attention to each of their managers. All four of them had completed the IMS Certificate in previous years: Keith Robbins (Tesco) in 2012, George Addicott (Nissan) in 2016, Andrew Hurdley (VOA) in 2013 and Dave Garbett (Harrison Spinks) in 2011. They had all progressed since then, and stayed with the same employer, so to mark this achievement he told them a gift was on its way to each of them from Scott-Grant.

The managers were unanimous in their conviction that the IMS Certificate is the ideal start for those involved in improving productivity. Keith Robbins’ comments were typical, "The IMS Certificate gives a great grounding in productivity principles and sets students in good stead for their whole business life.”

It is always worth celebrating success and this year, maybe more than others, it is especially important.
How business reengineering evolved to become a restricted management practice part II. By Dr John McManus.

In 1996, Davenport published an article entitled ‘Why Re-engineering Failed: The Fad that Forgot People’ in which he reports:

‘To most business people in the United States, reengineering has become a word that stands for restructuring, lay-offs, and too often, failed change programmes ... companies that embraced [reengineering] as the silver bullet is now looking for ways to re-build the organisation’s torn fabric (p.70).’

Cao, Clarke, and Lehaney (2001) consider that there may not be a single reason that causes high rates of failure in BR implementation. However, there may be several reasons that contribute to the failure of implementing change successfully. Morgan (2005) also spells out the reason why many BR initiatives never get beyond the internal stage of process improvement. Typically, it is because the organisation does not spend the necessary time and effort in working with its customers to develop competitive advantage for
both parties. Pitfalls consist of failing to ensure that senior managers understand the new, underlying capabilities of the BR strategy and the implications this has on the business and its operations.

The seemingly high failure rate of BR projects (Appendix A, page 22) has always been one of the major barriers in convincing organisations to fully commit. BR efforts have stressed the importance of introducing radical changes to obtain quantum leap improvements. Earlier BR initiatives were focused on the ‘big bang’ approach. This is an all or nothing strategy, in essence a clean sheet approach which offers the greatest rewards and carries the biggest risk and of course, failure. In adopting this big bang stance, improvements are highly dependent upon synchronisation of activities within each process, which is difficult to achieve. According to Eliyahu Goldratt’s ‘theory of constraints’, reengineering does not provide an effective way to focus improvement efforts on the organisation’s constraint. In essence, the approach generally swaps one set of constraints for another. More often than not, constraints are produced by default once in place and they remain integral during the process of change, no matter how long change may take.

Respondents were asked to give a percentage indicating the level of success that their organisations have achieved in BR implementation. Overall average success percentage was 55.46%. Respondents were asked to give a percentage indicating the level of success that their organisations have achieved in BR implementation.

In BR, no approach is ever perfect, and any solution for a constraint in one domain is guaranteed to need adjustment before it can solve a similar problem in another. A more cautious approach is to adopt an incremental means to achieve results. One of the benefits of this method is that it minimises disruption to the business. The downside is that it takes longer to achieve results and may require additional funds for implementation (McManus: 1997a). A process cannot be reengineered overnight. A very vital part in the success of reengineering effort, lies in improving the reengineered process continuously. Another consideration is that most business processes are reliant on people at every point, and on informal knowledge and shared behaviour to make it occur.

**Process management an interdisciplinary perspective**

It is evidenced with the references, that implementing BR is not an easy task and frequently requires an interdisciplinary approach which is driven by the immediate needs of senior management. The demarcation between interdisciplinary techniques of process management is often arbitrary and in recent times, there has been a fusion of methods (such as BR, continuous improvement, TQM (total quality management), and VCA (value chain analysis) as management seeks to force change management initiatives to the forefront of their agendas, in order to transform the organisation’s products and services. While these approaches are driven by business necessity and to a lesser extent globalisation, each method encapsulates its own ideology for managing improvement and change.

**The seemingly high failure rate of BR projects has always been one of the major barriers in convincing organisations to fully commit.**

As suggested previously, BR, TQM and continuous improvement have always been considered mutually exclusive. However, if performed simultaneously, they complement each other amazingly well. According to James Martin, TQM can be used as a tool to handle the various problems encountered during the BR effort and to continuously improve the process. In corporations that have no TQM culture, application of TQM to the newly designed processes should be undertaken as a part of the reengineering effort (Martin: 1995).

A totally separate approach to business process improvement, is ‘Lean’, some argue that Lean is the natural successor to BR. Originally, ‘Lean Production’, subsequently shortened to just Lean, was first introduced in a book entitled *The Machine that Changed the World* (Womack et al: 2008). The book summarises the results for a five year research project known as the International Motor Vehicle Program (IMVP) and initiated by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1985. Within eight years and by the early 2000s, Lean concepts had spread to a variety of industries and in many countries across the globe. Whilst somewhat different in approach, Lean does share many of ideological goals of BR, for instance in process management and value analysis. The authors Womack and Jones, argue that a Lean way of thinking allows companies to specify value, create outcomes in the best sequence, and sequence activities without interruption. The starting point is to understand what the customer values and how this value may be delivered to the benefit of both purchaser and provider (1990: p.16).

Similar to Davenport, this approach is based on an iterative cycle where the process is designed and repeated until perfection has been reached; a perfect value being when no waste is created within the process. Again, similar to BR, the approach requires management dedication. Without a clear understanding of what the objectives are and which tools to employ, uncertainty will ensue and loss of confidence in the approach is likely to occur. The use of Lean to improve processes in industries other than manufacturing has proven to be a success, although it has not been without its problems. According to Netland (2015), there are significant cost advantages to introducing Lean. However, the number of failed transformation projects is still high historically; as many as 50% fail at the initial stage (Kotter: 1995, p60).

Although the service sector is behind manufacturing industries in applying BR and Lean methods during the last ten years, many service sector organisations have started
to introduce Lean initiatives to cut waste and improve efficiency. These include sectors such as healthcare, education, banking and information technology providers such as WIPRO Technologies, which have used Lean to streamline their business processes. The movement of Lean principles into service industries is growing, and more businesses are implementing the principle in order to cut costs and gain the efficiency benefits.

Since technology is now a vital part of running any organisation it should not be ignored in planning or executing improvement initiatives. In considering BR, management needs to factor into the decision-making process, the extent to which their technology infrastructure will be affected by reengineered processes. An important consideration is the process for migrating redundant or legacy systems to new environments or platforms. Replacing technology is never a cut-price option. Frequently, the hardware will be changed and updated, and new software packages will be adopted to support the business process or processes. In this context, staff will require training (and retraining) so training needs to be factored into any change plan. Whilst this seems obvious, organisations sometimes underestimate the cost and time required to support this activity. The lack of training for the workforce will inevitably cause reengineering efforts to fail. Evidence by Glass (1998), Kemp and McManus (2009) suggests in many cases, that the reengineering of business processes will take advantage of newer technology as compared to the legacy systems.

**Conclusion**

Embarking on BR is a risky endeavour, with no guarantees for success. Business reengineering efforts are abundant with examples of failures. Given the complexity and restrictions of undertaking BR, the question arises as to whether it is worth starting in the first place. For some enterprises, the thought of doing nothing is not an option. If this is the case, then on balance, the answer must lean towards yes rather than no. First of all, a detailed understanding of the current processes, a key deliverable from the stepped approach, can help identify fundamental risks and associated problems, some of which can be rectified through incremental change. Equally, it may be possible to identify stages in the process, where a broader approach could add value for the customer without too much additional effort. The BR exercise can give rise to unexpected benefits, such as mutual ownership.

As discussed, BR initiatives require leadership and management commitment, not only to provide financial support but to counter resistance. Like all major change programmes, BR requires a modification of behaviour and a ‘can do’ mind set and culture. The focal point on managing culture should be aimed at winning the hearts and minds of those that will be affected by the changes; this includes both internal and external stakeholders. Since most of the problems and challenges will be about people's orientation to change (managers frequently underestimate how hard it can be to pull people out of their comfort zone) it is incumbent on the executive team to properly plan for change, and control the obstacles to change in all stages of the process, and as Chamberlin (2010) suggests, abdication does little for present and future success.

**References**


Some scholars argue that one of the major problems that contribute to the failure of BR projects, is a lack of tools for evaluating the effects of designed solutions before implementation.
## APPENDIX A

### Reported BR Failure Rates
(sample from literature 1994-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature (see references)</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Davenport</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Provides numerous examples of firms that have failed BR projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Caron</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Reported a 50% failure rate with BR projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John McManus</td>
<td>1995, 1997</td>
<td>Reported that BR projects have less than a 50% chance of success during implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Galliers</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Reported that only around 30% of BR projects were regarded as a success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majed Al-Mashari</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Reported that 70% of the BR fails during the implementation because of lack of planning and proper measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majed Al-Mashari</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Their study reported that the overall level of success in BR implementation was 55% – suggesting a failure rate of 45%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Crowe</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>This statistical survey has demonstrated that 75% of BR projects fail or experience problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samali Mlay</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Reported that 30% BR projects have delivered usable results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedram Bahramnejad</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Reported failure rates of 50%-70% (see Davenport).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imtiaz abdul-kader</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Reported failed BR projects in a range between 62-68%.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Footnotes**

1. Productivity is simply the rate of conversion of inputs to outputs. Productivity increases if the same quantity of inputs: land, labour, and capital produces more output.

2. Michael Porter emphasised the idea of a value chain. In essence, a value chain is a collection of all the processes that an organisation uses to generate a product or service that is valued by a specific group of customers.

**About the Author**

Dr John McManus

John McManus is a strategist, researcher, author, advisor, speaker and teacher. Throughout his academic career and writings, he has brought strategy concepts to bear on many of the most demanding problems facing emerging economies, including global and national competition and firm strategy. Dr McManus research is widely cited and his articles have received international recognition and awards.

In this article, Cliff Moyce describes the history, methods and successes of microcredit and mobile-money, examines why banks have failed with the same methods, and argues for a change of focus and approach by the World Bank if it is serious about alleviating poverty.

Extreme poverty (living on less than $1.90 per day) is the world’s biggest single killer and its greatest cause of ill-health and suffering (WHO, 1995). Yet, despite 713 million people worldwide living in such distressed and dangerous circumstances (World Data Lab, 2020), the problem goes largely unreported (WHO, 1995). The causes of poverty are many and complex, as are its correlates (hunger, malaria, child mortality etc) and its potential solutions. One solution that has been shown to be effective is to help people increase their economic activity. Another related solution, is to help them become part of a financial community, so that they can send, receive and store money quickly, easily, cheaply and at distance.
Since the early 1980s, people living in poor rural communities (initially in Bangladesh) have been able to obtain small loans from microcredit schemes run by not-for-profit social enterprises, to help fund and expand their economic activities (e.g. producing artisanal goods).

Similarly, since the late 1990s, a user-innovation (initially in the Philippines and sub-Saharan Africa) for transferring value to others through mobile phones, has grown to become formalised mobile-money schemes (aka digital financial services or electronic money) operated by telecoms companies. Both microcredit and mobile-money have proved to be something of a phenomenon in helping people raise themselves out of poverty (Latifee, 2000; Jack & Suri, 2016) and as a result have expanded worldwide. As well as their role in alleviating poverty, both microcredit and mobile-money have something else in common – they are financial services that come from (and remain) outside of the traditional banking and financial services industry. Attempts by banks to replicate their success by offering microloans (for profit) or mobile banking to those living in poverty have largely failed (Sinclair, 2012; Rea & Nelms, 2017). They have even worsened the situation of many customers (Bateman, 2010) and caused a backlash against microcredit in particular (ibid).

Of all those people living in extreme poverty, 72% (512 million) live in Africa (38% of the population, World Data Lab 2020). Within Africa, it is Sub-Saharan Africa that has the biggest problem, containing 22 of the world’s poorest 25 countries measured by gross national income per capita (GNI) and all ten of the world’s ten poorest countries (Stebbins, 2020). Of these ten countries, the Central African Republic is poorest, with a GNI of $663, followed by Burundi ($686), Democratic Republic of the Congo ($796), Niger ($906), and Malawi ($1064). In terms of percentages, Central African Republic again fares worst, with an almost unimaginable 78% of its population living in extreme poverty, followed by Malawi (71%) and Mozambique (60%) (World Data Lab, 2020). Even oil-rich Nigeria has 102 million people – 50% of its population – living on less than $1.90 per day (ibid). The true scale of the problem rises to 1.85bn and 3.4bn people, if you include those covered by the World Bank’s two further strata of poverty at $3.50 and $5.20 per day (World Bank, Oct 7, 2020).

Despite these shocking figures, hope springs eternal (as Alexander Pope once said), and it can come from unexpected quarters. One of those quarters is the information and telecommunications (ICT) industry. Specifically, the rise of ‘mobile-money’ (the ability to send and receive money on a mobile phone without need of a bank account or any other formal financial service) has allowed some of the poorest communities to keep more of the money that they earn, increase their entrepreneurial and economic activity, and escape poverty. The phenomenon of mobile-money started in the late 1990s when mobile phone users had the idea of transferring ‘value’ to one another in the form of unused mobile phone minutes.
New schemes
Spotting this innovative behaviour, mobile network operators started their own formal mobile-money schemes. The earliest were Smart Money (2000) and GCash (2004) in the Philippines; and M-Pesa in Kenya and Tanzania (2007). These services allowed people to visit a licensed agent (typically an independent retailer, aka a ‘mom and pop’ store) and deposit cash onto their SIM cards, from where it could be transferred to other people in seconds via the short messaging system (SMS). Users of the service would typically not qualify for bank accounts nor could they afford them if they were offered. Official money transfer agencies such as Western Union and Moneygram were charging up to 22% of the principle amount to effect transfers in sub-Saharan Africa at this time (Provost, 2013) and thus were to be avoided if possible. Informal methods of money transfer such as handing money to bus drivers took time and effort. New functions and services were soon added to mobile money as it became a success, including the ability to make purchases; get a short-term loan; make repayments; effect international transfers; receive social security payments; pay taxes and energy bills; and, receive charitable donations and other non-governmental contributions (Rea & Nelms, 2017). Researchers Jack & Suri (2016) reported that 192,000 families (2% of all households) had escaped poverty in Kenya as a result of using Safaricom’s M-Pesa mobile-money scheme. Interviewees reported an increased ability to save money (as M-Pesa had removed the risk of theft that came with saving cash at home), and a newfound opportunity for women to move out of agriculture and into business. ‘For women, the ability to send and receive payments, save, and get credit for expanding their businesses can be transformational.’ (World Bank, April 29, 2020).

These days, mobile-money runs on smartphone apps, as well as the original SIM-card versions; M-Pesa has added Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Lesotho, and Mozambique to its field of operations; there are 132 different mobile-money schemes with 393 million users and 1.4 million active agents in sub-Saharan Africa (GSMA, 2019); and, there are 300 separate mobile-money schemes running worldwide, with a billion registered users and global mobile-money transactions (bill payments, cash transfers etc) approaching $200 billion per annum (GSMA, 2019b). Forty-five percent of all mobile-money
As a result of the successes of mobile-money provided by telecom companies, the World Bank has changed its definitions of success for its Financial Inclusion programme.

Basic financial services
To an extent, the success reported by Jack & Suri (2016) for mobile-money concords with the view of the World Bank: ‘Gaining access to basic financial services such as transaction accounts, credit, savings products and insurance help the poor increase their incomes and become more resilient.’ (World Bank April 29, 2020); and, ‘Financial inclusion facilitates day-to-day living, and helps families and businesses plan for everything, from long-term goals to unexpected emergencies. As account holders, people are more likely to use other financial services such as savings, credit and insurance, starting and expanding businesses, investing in education or health, managing risk, and weathering financial shocks, all of which can improve the overall quality of their lives.’ (World Bank UFA2020 Overview).

However, the World Bank assumed that these basic financial services would come from its partners in the traditional, formal banking industry, and tasked those partners with increasing access for the poor to bank branches, products and services as part of its Financial Inclusion agenda (World Bank, 2020b). By many measures, this either hasn’t happened (GSMA, 2019) or has not worked where it has happened (see comments above about banks copying microcredit), with many financial institutions showing little appetite for ‘poverty finance’ (Microloan Foundation, 2018). In 2020, formal banking services remained unavailable to many in Sub-Saharan Africa, with an average of only two ATM machines per 1000km² and one bank branch per 1000km² (GSMA, 2019).

As a result of the successes of mobile-money provided by telecom companies, the World Bank has changed its definitions of success for its Financial Inclusion programme. Now, people having ‘financial accounts’ (instead of ‘bank accounts’) and holding money on ‘electronic devices’ (rather than just in bank accounts) count as achieving financial inclusion.

These changes may seem opportunistic – as they make the World Bank appear more influential in fighting poverty than it has been – but they reflect the reality that once people have a mobile-money account on their phone they (a) have no immediate and obvious need of traditional banking services, (b) their chances of escaping poverty are improved, and (c) the conditions for financial inclusion appear to have been met. Though no-one is claiming that the level of success seen in Kenya will appear automatically wherever mobile-money schemes appear (the scheme was very well supported by the government, employers and others; and, Vodafone especially, had poverty alleviation at the front of its mind when it launched the scheme), the conditions needed to gain maximum benefit from the method have been demonstrated and can be copied by those with the same interests.

Microcredit: The beginning
In parallel with the success of mobile-money there is the success of the modern incarnation of microcredit (and the two are not mutually exclusive). Microcredit started in 1976, when a young economics professor at University of Chittagong (Muhammad Yunus) experimented with a loan of $27 to 42 accounts registered globally are in sub-Saharan Africa, while 33% are in South Asia (including the Philippines, GSMA, 2019).
women in a nearby village. The amount allowed them to pay off a money lender who was funding raw material purchases for their craftwork but who was keeping most of their profits while their indebtedness increased. With the help of the loan, the women soon became self-sufficient and profitable in the manufacture and sale of their goods (Cosic, 2017). In 1983, Professor Yunus’s field experiment became Grameen Bank (ibid) which nearly 40 years later has 2600 branches and 9.6 million borrowers, having disbursed collateral-free loans of $24bn (Grameen Bank, 2019), while achieving a repayment rate of 98.92% from people deemed non-credit worthy by the formal finance industry (Grameen Bank, January 2020). Women make up 97% of Grameen Bank borrowers, and the bank has been active in 93% of all villages in Bangladesh, which is a total of 82,000 villages (Grameen Bank, 2019).

Latifee (2000) reported that 70% of customers of Grameen Bank borrowers had escaped extreme poverty within 4.2 years of taking a micro-loan. This success has inspired similar social-enterprise projects in more than 64 countries around the world. Meanwhile, Grameen Bank is expanding into helping women entrepreneurs in wealthy countries (where not everyone is wealthy, by any means), with 19 branches operating in eleven US cities lending more than $1.5bn to 129,000 women so far (Grameen America, 2020).

Seeing these examples of financial inclusion and poverty alleviation being achieved through financial services coming from outside the traditional industry, the World Bank asked its banking partners to copy their services in the countries being targeted for development. Banks did this by (a) marketing their mobile-app money transfer and payments services to poor communities (branded ‘Digital Financial Inclusion’ by the World Bank), and (b) offering microcredit in those same countries (branded ‘microfinance’ to include savings and payments as well as credit; Rea & Nelms, 2017). However, these ideas of the World Bank proved to be problematic, because:

1. The differences between mobile-money on phones, and accessing bank money transfer services via phone apps is stark. The obvious difference being that you need a bank account to use the latter. The ability to open a bank account has always been and still remains, difficult for almost all people living in extreme poverty. Physically attending a bank branch in a country with poor financial services can be a challenge (attendance is still the norm in Africa when opening a bank account). The challenge can include the cost of travel to the branch, which can be two or three days away, as can proving yourself to be (a) who you say you are, and (b) creditworthy. All that before paying fees of up to $100 to open the account and having to maintain a minimum balance. Another difference is utility: it often remains easier to use mobile-money schemes for transfers and payments, than using bank products and services with their bureaucracy and charges, even if bank services are available readily. Finally, there proved to be a difference in motivation and philosophy when partners of the World Bank got involved, which was summarised by Prahalad (2005) as a desire to exploit ‘the fortune at the bottom of the pyramid’.

The ability to open a bank account has always been and still remains, difficult for almost all people living in extreme poverty.

2. Successful microcredit schemes run by social enterprises make poverty alleviation their #1 priority, whereas banks offering micro-loans aim to make a profit by limiting their risk (which thus excludes most people living in extreme poverty) and/or charging high interest rates (which can exacerbate the original problem). Sinclair (2012) reports on bank-based microcredit schemes charging exorbitant interest rates, borrowers stuck in never-ending debt spirals, and aggressive collection practices, resulting in forced prostitution, child labour, suicide, and nationwide revolts against the microfinance community (many of whom confuse microfinance provided by banks with microcredit provided by social enterprises). Bateman (2010) talks of bank-based schemes being based on ‘Wall Street-style greed, deception and individual self-interest.’ His case studies from India, Cambodia, Bolivia, Uganda, Serbia, and Mexico, demonstrate that microfinance operated for-profit by banks, can constitute a barrier to sustainable economic and social development, and thus create a barrier to alleviating poverty. Simply put, the people become even poorer and their chances of escaping poverty are reduced.

Final thoughts
All the evidence so far, seems to suggest that the degree of financial activity, utility and freedom (and support for entrepreneurship) claimed by the World Bank for its Financial Inclusion programme, is not coming anytime soon from the banking industry. In fact, the World Bank and its partners can be argued to be part of the problem and can even be added to the causes of extreme poverty where they operate copies of microcredit and mobile-money. If that is true – and there is an enormous amount of literature on the negative impacts of banks and card companies on poverty alleviation (eg see ‘Card Crusaders, Cash Infidels and the Holy Grails of Digital Financial Inclusion’ by Mader, 2016) – then the World Bank abandoning its Financial inclusion programme as currently defined and getting banks out of the game would literally save lives. Social enterprises and telecoms companies have shown us that financial services can play a big role in alleviating poverty, as long as they are delivered to the right people in the right way by the right people and for the right reasons.

Financial services is part of the solution when it is done the right way. If the World Bank cannot add value (because of its allegiances with the traditional industry) then other routes to supporting approaches known to work should be explored. As well as the methods and providers described thus far, such investigations should include fintech providers independent of banks.
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2021 is just beginning for those of us who lead and manage organisations, and we should be thinking of how we can rebuild a resilient business in the years ahead. As we recover from the crisis, we each have to make tough decisions based on minimal information. To build a resilient culture, you need to think about how better to enable your people to work together. Philip Atkinson believes that team building has a positive and long-lasting effect on the culture and performance of an organisation. In the second of his two article series, he explores two basic processes for significant team-building and suggests that this is a powerful way to deal with the challenges of change that we face beyond 2021.
Stage 1: Forming
Stage 1 is about forming and occurs when a group comes together for the first time. Perhaps this is with an existing team or a new team at the start of a new project. If there is insufficient investment in supporting the team to evolve in a structured fashion, they will fail to develop the norms for working effectively together. It is at this stage where the team manager has control but also has to be flexible enough to accommodate different working styles, combine the experience of the team or group members and assess how best to position them to deal with the difficulty of the task they have to perform.

In this first stage, the team may not be very productive, and might lack focus, which is why a manager or team leader has to ensure that direction is clarified and training undertaken for the team to work.

Not all team members automatically behave in a robust team manner. There could be several reasons for this in terms of the team lacking direction, motivation and a coherent plan of how to work together. For instance, a team may have a formal leader with little experience in the role. The issue here is that any team needs leadership, direction and a strategy for working together. We know some teams just gel, but they are in the minority. What you do need is a team leader who can bring three critical issues to the team, direction and focus, energy and motivation and finally aligning all resources to achieve the objective. If you can do that, you will avoid the next stage in group development or it will quickly pass by without any problems.

Stage 2: Storming
If a group or team is floundering, you will need to progress through ‘Storming’ because a leaderless team is going nowhere. You need to intervene and provide structure. You have to push the team through stage 2, which is the Storming phase, where people openly question and review their performance and may take the lead to improve. Often teams have to go through this stormy phase to clear the air about what is hindering performance. The reasons that groups or teams are underperforming are many. It could need more direction and clarity in its purpose. Roles, responsibilities and reporting relationships might need to be clarified, reworked or reassigned. Whatever is not working needs to start working very quickly, otherwise morale in the team will plummet, and building team motivation in the group will be difficult. The team leader or manager has to be decisive, take action, and demonstrate honesty and candour in fixing that which is not working. The sooner you progress this stage, the better.

The team leader or manager has to be decisive, take action, and demonstrate honesty and candour in fixing that which is not working.
It is worth noting that you may consider some of the team or groups you work with, which may also display some of the characteristics we have referred to here. Don’t assume that all working teams have successfully progressed through this stage. Many teams still function but are neither efficient nor effective.

The Storming stage is where you confront confusion, ambiguity, and lack of focus. You have to expose conflict and grievances. Add purpose and structure to their work. Teams need structure. They also need to be involved, engaged and empowered but, most importantly, they need firm leadership and direction. At the end of this stage, you need to put the past behind you and move onto the positive third stage, which is Norming.

Norming
Norming is where you actively develop standards of performance which should become the ‘norm’ for working and comprise ‘business as usual.’ Norms are about setting standards and ‘the way we do things around here’. Listen to every point of view, let people blow off steam and then make decisions about the direction they need to take.

Focus initially on key roles and responsibilities – who is reporting to whom, and what are the work standards by which individuals and the overall team will be judged? If this comes from the team, so much the better. You can provide structure – but it’s better to come from them. The great thing about asking for collaboration with the team is that when you request a team to develop work norms and standards of behaviour, they usually set higher standards than you might set for them.

Here are some things to do
1. Test others for their understanding of behavioural standards which the team will adhere and clarify and resolve issues openly.
2. Explore opportunities for team development and maintain a balance between the business agenda and having fun.
3. Ask the team to test new ways of working together.

As the team evolves and steadily improves how they work together, a great deal of learning takes place, and the creation of these ‘unwritten’ rules or norms will promote a positive move forward. These positive unofficial ‘norms’ can often carry more weight than official protocols and processes. If this process is managed well by the team leader or manager, team members will work together to develop a productive and cohesive work team.

Performing
When you have worked tirelessly in Storming and Norming, the natural progression is to stage 4, which is Performing; when positive norms evolve and are embedded, and the team will go on to become a highly valued team because you have coached them through to maturity. That is the maturity model. It is well worth working with this and coaching people through the process.

Review of team maturity model
You have to decide how you will undertake this analysis. The diagnosis of team maturity can be undertaken using a variety of tools such as ‘questionnaire analysis’ assessing relative symptoms of issues for resolution and other behavioural metrics, based on
team problem solving and decision-making effectiveness, process flow and Interaction Analysis. Interaction analysis is what takes us to the next stage of diagnosis.

**Team personality types**

Now let’s move onto the role that people can play within the team. Professor Meredith Belbin developed the concept of team types while working on special projects with NASA. His research suggested that an effective team needs a variety of types of styles and skills to make the team effective. An effective team is composed of differing personality types. He characterised nine special team roles, four with an external orientation and four focused internally in the team and one as a technical specialist. Here we have a brief version of those roles and how they contribute to team performance.

Four team types operate effectively on the boundary of the team and include the coordinator, shaper, plant and resource investigator. These people offer direction and are very comfortable working across groups and functions. They naturally gravitate towards external contact and relationships.

**Coordinator or chairperson**

The coordinator is the diplomat, who would chair or referee team dynamics. The coordinator would provide structure and be supportive in moving things forward without offending members. Coordinators know the right thing to do and will be fair with team members. These people are good at bringing people together, understand the administrative and task demands of the group, and generally take all ideas and opinions into account when conducting or closing off business. Most teams need a chairperson.

Take note, and if the team do not have a person who is responsible for coordination, then you will be putting the progress of the group at risk. You will have to develop people to occupy this role. Too many coordinators are not a good idea because they will want to organise and reorganise things and could develop a bureaucratic nightmare in the team.

**Shaper**

The next role is the shaper, who will add drive and motivation when the team lacks focus. You need a shaper in a team if you don’t have anyone to coordinate things. Be aware that they may add the energy, but also create conflict to get things done when people are dragging their feet. Shapers tend to be driven by achievement, and they like to take responsibility for getting things done. Shapers are impatient if they think that progress is slow, or people are not giving their 100%. Shapers make things happen, but too many of them can create an ‘interesting’ climate and even hostile working relationships between people. If you have multiple shapers, you will need to manage them carefully and ensure they have enough to do, and are not writing their own agenda or going off on their safari!

**Plants**

Plants are ‘ideas’ people. They are innovative, generally tend to be quite introverted and keep their ideas to themselves. They are very much the ‘innovative professor ‘type’ who have unique or even innovative ideas and like to break free of self-imposed rules of a team failing to think outside the box. If you have too many plants, the team might not progress. There may be too many ideas on the table and no-one to bring everything together. If rejected without careful thought and consideration, the plant may take personal exception to this and withdraw from the group. What is very common is that some groups have very few, if any, plants within them. Generally, the personality style that contributes to plant type behaviour is not always...
encouraged in organisations because they have their ‘head in the clouds’, are disruptive and unorthodox, when in fact their contribution is vital. Even nowadays, most companies employ very few people who portray these skills.

**Resource investigators**

Finally, we have resource investigators who are great networking people. They form relationships with a variety of people in other organisations and with other functions, and generally are the ‘go-to’ people if you need something done. Their creativity and ‘can do’ nature is fantastic at forming partnerships, relationships outside the team, and they are brilliant at gaining resource to making things happen.

So, consider what happens to the team if you have no resource investigators? Resource investigators get on with things and don’t wait for approval. If you have too many, you could have chaos, with multiple people pursuing numerous agendas, while too few will create solutions which are too narrow and inward-looking.

Managing these four externally orientated types is interesting. Consider if you have too many or too few of each type – what dynamics will it create within the team? Consider these dynamics and how you manage them.

**Internally focused team members**

Now we are going to introduce you to five characters who are focused internally and are the heart of the team. They are monitor evaluators, implementers, team workers, completer finishers and specialists.

**Monitor evaluators**

They are good at data analysis, critical thinking, questioning assumptions, taking things apart and challenging the thinking. Like the shaper, they can be perceived as abrasive, but at their heart is the need to assess, weigh things up and get the right answer. They will develop a depth of understanding which is unrivalled. They bring a fresh way of looking at traditional problems and display critical thinking. A team or group with too many will devote too much time to testing each other’s opinion, ideas and assumptions. When you eventually arrive at an answer, after the much-informed debate, it will be a very well thought out answer. With too few or nil monitor evaluators, the team could easily go down the wrong path.

**Implementers**

When Belbin first developed his model of ‘group personality dynamics’ he referred to these people as company workers and then decided to change the name to implementers, because the original terms implied staff of lower status. The emphasis is on people who roll up their sleeves and commit themselves 100% to getting things done right. Their focus is on implementing ideas – not just talking about them. Procrastination is not in their nature. Implementers are focused on getting things done and making a difference. In our experience, you cannot have too many implementers, but you can have too few.

**Team workers**

Highly valued for promoting team harmony. They are real ‘people, people’ are energetic and enthusiastic, and believe it’s equally important to balance tasks and relationships when working together. Team workers are keen on ensuring that the needs of the group or team members are met and that the group is working well together towards worthwhile and shared solutions. They will value harmony and effective working relationships above task competency. They are vital to the team, because their enthusiasm for others and optimism for the group will promote longevity. They will know the right thing to say,

> [Often] when you request a team to develop work norms and standards of behaviour, they usually set higher standards than you might set for them.
put people at ease and be concerned about people individually and collectively. A word of warning, if you have too many team workers, you could end up managing a social club where the interests and needs of members take over to the detriment of the task. However, too few or no team workers creates a coldness, a formality and a clinical atmosphere in the group, which is not going to do much in providing energy to a group when required.

Completer finishers
Completer finishers have an eye for detail and make sure every ‘i’ is dotted and ‘t’ crossed. They tend to be a little introverted and not a major form of energy to the group – but they are vital to its functioning. It’s all very well to have shapers braving new territory, and plants with lofty business ideas, but if the detail is not right, the whole project can come crashing down. Completer finishers are good with a sequence. They will track through implications from A-Z and ensure that all ideas are tested. They may appear to be slow, but they are displaying patience and tenacity. They want it to work. Working with monitor evaluators and implementers, they form a very strong bond to successfully implementing solutions.

Too many completer finishers will slow things down, and every decision will be exploring minitua. Too few, and projects could collapse because of failure to apply due diligence.

Specialist
Finally, we have the addition of the specialist, who adds technical input only. Specialists are available for specific input and producing technical input. Too many specialists can result in a stalemate, a zero-sum game with discussion and debate but no decisions taken. Too few and you don’t reap the rewards of precise data. This could make your project fail.

Summary: Team maturity and team composition = team effectiveness
There you have it – an approach to exploring team effectiveness using two significant models.

The team maturity model using the four stages is potent. The majority of teams in many sectors and organisations do not achieve a high state of team maturity and effectiveness.

Team composition, team personality types and interaction analysis demonstrate we could achieve more by focusing on assessing personal strengths, and how they are utilised effectively in group working and problem-solving.

Knowing and working with both approaches is critical in understanding the dynamics behind a team’s performance. If you have a specialist project composed of people from a variety of functions, locations and specialisms, you have to manage the dynamics of the group, and that means managing personality differences. We find training people in understanding their type and how they contribute to a team, is fundamental to effective team performance.

You will quickly be able to identify whether or not, and why, teams are working well. Combine the thinking of team types with team maturity, and you have a compelling set of tools for managing exceptional performance in these difficult and confusing times.
How to Boost UK Productivity After Coronavirus

Will the UK’s lack of recent productivity growth be a hindrance to a successful recovery post-COVID? Asks Jun Du, Professor of Economics at Aston University.

Productivity is the output produced given the inputs employed, such as hired labour, capital and materials. It describes how efficiently a producer or service provider combines these inputs to deliver products or services. Crucially, productivity can turbo-charge economic growth – and ensure the survival and expansion of firms.

But while a productivity slowdown has put the brakes on many developed economies since the 2008 financial crisis, the UK has been particularly hard hit. This will almost certainly be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

UK productivity growth has lagged behind that of other comparable economies since the 1970s and the country has suffered virtually zero growth in labour productivity since 2008, the latter known as the UK ‘productivity puzzle’. By 2016, the output per hour worked in the UK was 16.3% below the average of the rest of the G7 countries – although this has improved following adjustments to how labour input is measured.

But why? And what can be done about it in these uncertain times? Aston Business School explored this in a recent white paper.

In the short term, tumbling global and local demand and a slow economic recovery following the financial crisis arguably have played a part, as have other factors such as falling real
wages and low business dynamism. Low real wages and low productivity usually go hand in hand – there's less incentive to be productive when you're undervalued – while low business dynamism reduces the likelihood of innovative ideas boosting productivity.

As part of the UK government’s austerity programme, around half a million jobs were slashed from the UK public sector, while the private sector added 1.7 million jobs between 2012 and 2015. But evidence suggests that many of these new private sector, self-employed roles were low-productivity, part-time and based on zero hours contracts. On average, these mean low pay, low skills utilisation and few opportunities for skills development.

Meanwhile, the acute decline in demand has also made firms less willing to invest in innovation and new ideas that might improve productivity. Again, COVID-19 could present even greater challenges, as firms are likely to invest less in research and development (R&D) than usual due to uncertainties and financial pressure.

So where does that leave us? We argue that technology, innovation and skills are central to the conundrum.

**Skills crisis**

There is some hope for the UK economy. In recent years, skills have improved at every skill level and are expected to continue to do so. High skills are already relatively abundant – 46% of adults aged 25-64 have some form of tertiary education, compared to an Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 37%. Meanwhile, in 2015, 13% of UK university students were enrolled in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects, compared to an OECD average of 6%.

But the situation is gloomier when it comes to low and medium skills. In fact, while the UK is predicted to be ranked seventh among OECD countries in 2020 for high (tertiary level education) skills, it is projected to be 22nd for low (below upper secondary) skills and an even lowlier 28th for intermediate (upper secondary) skills.

The UK also lags behind its competitors in vocational education and training – and many adults remain hampered by poor literacy and, particularly, numeracy. Ranked 13th out of 18 countries by the benchmark Surveys of Adult Skills, a staggering quarter of UK adults scored at Level 1 or below (out of five) for numeracy skills (the OECD average is 19%). Worryingly for the future, the UK is the only country where older people (aged 55-64) outperformed younger people (16-24) in both literary and numeracy.

Productivity is driven by technology, but it demands the right level of skills, deployed when and where needed to be effective. And in the UK, growth in this new environment continues to be held back by workplace skills shortages, gaps and mismatches.

New technologies and their adoption require varied skills. Nowadays, innovation in manufacturing means that customer service and embedding algorithms in customers' software systems are as important as bashing metals. These changes must be adapted to if firms are to become more productive.

As technology advances, it’s no surprise that there are skills shortages and mismatches. But they must be addressed by
policy, corporate practices and innovative thinking – especially in the current climate. Skills gaps may lead to reduced short-term R&D expenditure and long-term fixed capital investment, slowing productivity further. At a regional level, skills gaps sharpen competition for skills and talents between companies, favouring fast-growth firms while impairing others.

There is a long way to go before a healthy balance is maintained. The UK Commission for Employment and Skills’ (UKCES) 2015 Employee Skills Survey (ESS) found that one in seven employers identified workers who were not sufficiently proficient in their positions, amounting to an estimated 1.4 million employees.

Meanwhile, three in ten employers are estimated to experience ‘over-skilling’, whereby employees are over-qualified and under-utilised. This is a clear waste of resources and a missed opportunity for productivity growth.

But while skills gaps are a central part of the productivity problem, current efforts to assess their scale tend to fall short. This is because skill levels are often measured via formal educational attainment. While most people finish their education by their early twenties, they can, and should in fact, continue to acquire skills throughout life – particularly if their workplace offers training. Indeed, existing statistics suggest the UK should encourage lifelong learning and better use of skills if it wants to boost growth, productivity and earnings.

Future research should reflect this – by focusing on levels of training and skills rather than education among the workforce.

The future

But the UK is also letting itself down on R&D, which helps drive firms’ innovations and productivity. The good news is that the UK has a world-leading fundamental science base and is ranked fourth among economies producing the largest volume of top-cited scientific publications. Despite this, however, it spends less on R&D, relative to GDP, especially by its corporate sector, than many other major world economies. In 2016, the UK ranked just 11th in the EU.

In this new economic environment, information and communication technologies (ICTs) will play a key role, accounting for 70% of global patents. The UK, however, doesn’t feature among the top countries patenting emerging ICT technologies. And while it is on a par with France and Germany when it comes to artificial intelligence (AI) related patents, it is a long way behind Japan, Korea, the US, China and Taiwan. It also lags behind many other countries in robotics. These are issues the UK should consider as it seeks to thrive in this technological new world.

Productivity slowdown is not unique to the UK – it is a global issue that now faces a whole array of added challenges. Skills and technology are key components of the solution, but the two must be correctly balanced. Skills must meet the demands of evolving technologies, for they not only lead to new technological innovations, but also drive and facilitate their adoption and diffusion.

There is no easy fix. But forward-looking, bold policies, inspired and informed by solid research and a global perspective, are key to lifting the UK out of the productivity doldrums and providing a lasting recovery post-COVID-19.

- Economics
- Employment
- Productivity
- GDP growth
- Wage growth
- Job skills
- UK productivity
- UK employment

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In this new economic environment, information and communication technologies (ICTs) will play a key role, accounting for 70% of global patents.

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The New Norm: Hedonic Adaptation Phase

Dr David Parker and Morris Jones.

Ever before has management services been so vital to enterprises. It is incumbent upon our profession to ensure that workers have a safe environment and that activities do not result in harm – physical and psychological. COVID-19 has triggered a paradigm shift in society and work practices that now challenge the very bedrock of what we regard as normality.

For instance, working from home (wfh) has identified numerous challenges for both workers and organisations1. What is also evident, is that the once strong support for stopping the spread of COVID-19 as a priority over economic recovery has swung considerably – even though numbers of infections has continued to rise.

However, after some nine months of embracing the pandemic’s impact on virtually every facet of life, the health and wellbeing of people is now seriously at risk. Mental health-related compensation claims have risen 80% since COVID-19; and during this period more than a million Australians have sought mental health treatment, representing a 36% increase.

This initial increase in psychological problems was to be expected. Indeed, with any significant change to hitherto embedded practices, there are invariably emotional reactions: the classic and recognisable fright, fear, flight. However, the likelihood is that the change becomes normalised: described by the notion of hedonic adaptation – where the impact of a change is absorbed and becomes the ‘new norm’. For many, the changes have become accepted, but for others there is emotional resistance that could develop into psychological withdrawal.

Meanwhile, what then are the lessons to be learned and what actions are required? What additional responsibilities must organisations bear to support staff? What leadership style is needed? What should be the organisation’s communication strategy? What must organisations do to minimise psychological health issues?

Current environment

Global cases of COVID-19 have passed 110 million and have resulted in more than 2.4 million deaths (https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/worldwide-graphs/#total-cases. Accessed February 2021); moreover, daily numbers are continuing to rise despite most countries enforcing national lockdowns and...
social restrictions on movements throughout last year and in the early months of 2021 (see Figure 1).

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in global economic decline and social pandemonium. Britain has had over 100,000 deaths from some 4.6 million cases (https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/cases. Accessed February 2021). Australia has had 28,911 cases that have resulted in 909 deaths (https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/australia. Accessed February 2021).

But as governments have ramped up restrictions, affecting social interaction and causing isolation, as well as economic debt, many organisations have revamped their business models – some embracing digital technologies and online customer purchasing, others down-sizing or reducing operating space by adopting wfh.

Consequently, we rapidly reshaped our occupational practices, pared-back leisure pursuits, human interaction, and activities that support a healthy work-life balance. However, our interventions have only mitigated, not eliminated, the pandemic.

Whilst it is difficult to disentangle the specific aspects that have had an adverse bearing on workers’ psychological well-being during the pandemic and in particular wfh, social distancing, lockdown and the mounting threat of contracting the disease – there are clear markers of potential work-related problems that need to be acknowledged and acted upon.

**Expanded leadership**

In the current environment, there is a need for a greatly enhanced sympathetic, empathetic and pragmatic leadership. In particular, management services and executive leadership, more than ever before, need a high emotional intelligence (EI) quotient. EI reinforces our deeper understanding of the present social complexity (at an emotional level), the ability to apply emotional information to direct thinking and behaviour, be cognisant of the impact of what is said, and guide our actions on the feelings and emotional state of others – that is, our staff.

‘Man-up and get on with it; we are all in the same boat,’ does not help, encourage, nor motivate people or signal understanding.

**Imminent future**

In the foreseeable future, even with a vaccine, we will be living and working in an acutely changed world. Managing in imposed clinical regimes, with psychological impacts, social and economic disruption, will demarcate the hedonic adaptation period. Life will be labelled ‘normal’ albeit in a far more digital world, one very different from the business and commercial norms that has tailored our education, professional training and skill-sets. Team working will be relegated by the ability to problem-solve and take decisions when working alone.

In these early months that have witnessed COVID-19 increasing,
As governments have ramped up restrictions, affecting social interaction and causing isolation, as well as economic debt, many organisations have revamped their business models.

Recognise early warning signs:
- Loss of interest and motivation
- 'Burying head in the sand' – in denial of situation
- Despondency
- Heightened emotions
- Withdrawal from interaction with others
- Being over-sensitive or defensive
- Poor sleeping
- Deterioration of appearance
- Negativity
- Argumentative
- Low self-esteem
- Poorly organised

Strategies to reduce psychological hazards:
- Manage excessive work loads
- Reduce emphasis on results and targets
- Design processes for wfh
- Control work-life balance
- Clear reporting structures
- Reduce confrontations with colleagues
- Regular 1:1 meetings to consult and monitor
- Plan and structure daily work routine
- Encourage buddy and mentor programme

As governments have ramped up restrictions, affecting social interaction and causing isolation, diminishing and peaking yet again, our norms and work practices (comfort zones) have had to adapt to meet numerous changes. Social isolation, loss of regular income for many of us, and anxiety brought about by concerns of becoming infected, have also resulted in resilience – with social media platforms being used extensively to ‘keep in touch’.

Online shopping sites, digital services and social media, have also assisted both businesses and individuals – in terms of reducing economic decline, while adopting coping strategies. The impetus of digital business models embracing e-commerce, has allowed financial survival for many small businesses. A recent survey (January, 2021) conducted by UNCTAD and Netcomm Suisse eCommerce Association, titled: ‘COVID-19 and E-commerce’, examined how the pandemic has changed the way consumers use e-commerce and digital solutions. More than half of the survey’s respondents now shop online more frequently and rely on the internet more for news, health-related information and digital entertainment. The survey shows that online purchases have increased by six to ten percentage points across most product categories. The biggest gainers are ICT/electronics, gardening/do-it-yourself, pharmaceuticals, education, furniture/household products and cosmetics/personal care categories. The survey results suggest that changes in online activities are likely to outlast the COVID-19 pandemic. Buying and selling online has enabled some semblance of survival, providing consumers with a new way of coping during the lack of accessibility to high-street shops, lock downs, and safety and security.

Many changes in ways of doing business to counter the pandemic have, until now, been focused on what were formerly secondary channels for many organisations. Now, online delivery channels – as examples: education, medical care, finance, counselling, and groceries, clothing and household goods, are now primary channels for many. For those reliant on close proximity and face-to-face customer contact, the operating restrictions have often been fatal. To-date, some 3% of restaurants have gone out of business, and a further 15% fear that they would not survive an additional six months without the continuation of governments’ financial assistance (www.abc.net.au/news/coronavirus-hit-restaurants. Accessed February 2021). Hotels, travel and tourism industries have similar job losses. The knock-on effects on national economies have been enormous.

It is anticipated that working from home will continue – even increase. The ramifications of an accelerated digital trend, particularly on workers’ stress, anxiety, and psychological challenges, are not to be ignored by senior management. Indeed, leadership models universally adopted pre-COVID-19 are clearly not applicable in this new norm: for example, transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, values-based leadership, authentic leadership are amongst the popular types of leadership. However, under current conditions, servant leadership offers appealing advantages: leadership that facilitates vision, collaboration and change; while adopting a holistic approach and service to subordinates and others².

Morphing organisation culture
Intensifying wfh is challenging contemporary office practices. How will leadership models evolve to straddle between office and home-based practices or will each evolve along distinct pathways? What is best practice?
There is evidence that the new norm has resulted in the morphing of ‘company enclaves’ with a ‘them and us’ culture separating staff on the basis of work location. The two-location workplace has seen changes to the recruitment process and selection criteria. Greater emphasis is now placed on candidates having the personal skills and attributes to contribute positively in either situation, and a willingness to wfh as required to meet business requirements. The right temperament as well as skills are important, with a wrong fit potentially resulting in psychological problems.

Recent research conducted last year, has identified that stress and anxiety has increased 24%. Of significance, ‘loss of confidence, uncertainty and money worries’ were stated by 74%, 67% and 48% respectively of the 14,000 surveyed.

For many, the removal of commuting that previously provided a clear separation between home and work, was a factor in enhancing stress.

Conclusions
Management Services must step-up to the plate, and apply its invaluable skills to executive leadership; in particular, implementing productivity improvements. Complexity needs to be reduced in favour of simplicity.

These are extraordinary times: in social, commercial, and economic terms. Our professional, pragmatic skills are of paramount importance in developing new methods to meet current challenges, such as digital market places, but while ensuring the human dimension is prioritised.

Changes to work practices, particularly working from home, have been accompanied by increased psychological demands that must be addressed by a servant-style leadership model, augmented with enhanced emotional intelligence.

We are experiencing substantial disruption to our comfort zones, routines, job and role activities, resulting in enhanced stress. This is a recognised phenomenon, albeit for limited periods of time. However, the protracted period of the pandemic brings additional consequences. Consequently, early signs of psychological problems need to be urgently acted upon. The employing organisation’s management has a responsibility and duty of care for its workforce wherever located.

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Bibliography

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Create Loveable Jobs

Let your people do their best work by making their jobs loveable. In part II of his series, Dr James S Pepitone describes how. For why, see Part I which was published within the Winter 2020 issue.

Today, we are just lucky if our decisions and good fortune result in our having a loveable job, thus giving us direct access to our full potential.

Ever have a job you absolutely loved? It was a job that seemed tailor made for you. Your best job ever. If so, you are fortunate, plus you understand what a difference it can make to have a job you love.

At the Humaneering Technology Initiative (HTI), using ‘job fit’ technical criteria and assessment data, we estimate that only one person in 1000 in developed economies ever has a ‘loveable job’ sometime in their adult work experience.

‘Loveable Job’ sits atop an employee-response scale to indicate a maximum level of ‘job-level-culture’ support and projected employee ‘productivity potential’ of 80% or better. (See Figure 1).

Having a loveable job not only feels great, it increases our performance (ie, goal achievement) and productivity (ie, economic value creation) and enables us to achieve more of our full potential.
potential. Loving our job signals our intrinsic satisfaction of key human needs, wants, and desires. Essentially, it means we are freed up from typical job-related concerns, so we can focus more fully on performing our work the best we can.

Most of us have never had the experience of working in a truly loveable job. This makes it harder for us to accurately comprehend the full untapped potential of people to create economic value with their work. As a result, we and our employers systematically underestimate our potential. All anyone knows for sure is what we can do in our typically unloveable jobs.

**Loveable jobs will become the gold standard**

Today we rely on substantial luck for a job search or new venture to land us in a job we can genuinely love, thus giving us access to our full economic potential. Within the next decade, HTI is committed to making loveable jobs the gold standard for high productivity employment, and to helping employers smartly create them and job seekers easily identify them.

Employers will typically begin to explore this potential by creating loveable jobs for their more critical employee categories, primarily as a strategy to tap the full economic potential of people in these roles, and secondarily to retain existing and attract new employees.

The outsized investment returns from this strategy will then drive a focus on creating loveable jobs for many more employee categories, and especially customer-facing roles, often the worst jobs in a company.

Data from HTI’s pilot testing within people-dependent operations of major companies worldwide make clear that every company, regardless of industry and location, can now transform any or all its jobs to ‘loveable jobs’ by shifting to a human-centred approach to the relationship employees have with the work they perform and the situation in which they perform it.

A loveable jobs strategy will increase employee performance, loyalty and more. Later in this article the authors will discuss the reasons why so few jobs are loveable and explain how companies can capitalise on this opportunity.

But first, let us pick up the story I paused at the close of Part 1 (MS, Winter 2020) of this two-part article. We were about to learn how the CHRO of an engineering division for a major multinational company would try for the third time to keep her job by demonstrating to a new CEO she could provide the company’s thousands of engineers with a ‘loveable job’ experience.

**Rest of the story**

It was early 2016 when I received an email from this CHRO, wanting to discuss HTI’s assistance. She wrote at the suggestion of two HR staff members exposed to HTI’s thinking just months before when they worked for a different division of the company.
internal consultants having volunteered themselves to get involved in HTI’s work at the other division.

Now members of her staff were preparing a two-day event to create the CHRO’s third proposal. We agreed I would launch the activity with an online presentation to guide their work. In the talk, I explained the three principal developments in strategic human-capital-management thinking that were probably driving the CEO’s heightened concern for employee treatment.

1) Knowledge work must now drive work design and employee management systems

Virtually all industry sectors are witnessing a fundamental shift in human work from manual work (ie, primarily standardised physical tasks) to knowledge work (ie, primarily adaptive cognitive responses), which in turn is requiring businesses to dismantle and replace their control-based management methods conceived for manual work (eg, one right way, reward and punishment, labour time management) with accountability-based management methods conceived for knowledge work (eg, maximise economic value, security and performance compensation, opportunity management) (See Figure 3.)

Today’s executives may need a refresher in socioeconomic history to grasp this radical shift in human work and its repercussions. For example, few may consider the fact that manual work has evolved over human history, driven primarily by the invention and application of new tools, equipment, machines, training, computers and automation.

The evolution in human work began with most people performing rudimentary physical tasks (eg, gardening, transporting). Next, and most notably in developed economies, human work progressed to the practice of sophisticated talents and crafts (eg, mechanics, carpentry). Then, during the first half of the 20th century, most human work further advanced to what we now think of as standardised industrial labour (eg, complex product assembly, sophisticated machine operation).

Manual labour’s economic value increased substantially throughout this evolution and so did its compensation. During the first half of the 20th century, factory wages in the US increased from roughly $2 per day to $20 per hour. Then, during the last half of the 20th century, management radically shifted its thinking about manual labour based primarily on this increase in cost, combined with three additional socioeconomic developments – automation/robotics, global labour arbitrage, and child-development/education.

(i) Automation and robotics began providing industry sectors with alternatives to manual labour having impressive levels of precision, consistency, sustainability, and investment payback and return.

(ii) Global labour arbitrage made it possible for companies to shift many forms of standardised labour (eg, product assembly, customer service, technical and administrative services) to other regions of the world with dramatically lower wage rates and related costs.

(iii) Child-development and educational practices, for all the good they create, produce too many adults without sufficient capability and motivation to perform knowledge work – resulting in too many workers to perform a shrinking number of manual work jobs, and a shortage of workers capable of performing the increasing quantity of knowledge work jobs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASSIFICATION</th>
<th>MANUAL WORK</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE WORK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terminology</td>
<td>Standardised task</td>
<td>Adaptive response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard work</td>
<td>Responsive work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Required work</td>
<td>Discretionary work</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical work</td>
<td>Mental work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using one’s hands</td>
<td>Using one’s head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doing</td>
<td>Deciding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal and Solution</td>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Not clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Predetermined and prescribed to workers</td>
<td>Contingent on situation and determined by worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Assignment compliance</td>
<td>Opportunity capitalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complete assignment as directed</td>
<td>Maximise economic value derived from assigned opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of Economic Value</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standardisation</td>
<td>Differentiation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Simplicity</td>
<td>Sophistication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Large scale</td>
<td>Yield management</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Variation control</td>
<td>Variation potential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closed work system with identifiable root cause and direct effects</td>
<td>Open work system with diffused contributing causes and emergent effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work System Design</td>
<td>1. Work</td>
<td>1. Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority Order</td>
<td>2. Work environment</td>
<td>2. Worker</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Worker</td>
<td>3. Work environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Work environment should support work</td>
<td>Work environment should support worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essential Work Attributes</td>
<td>Specific objective</td>
<td>Specific opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practical workload</td>
<td>Meaningful job-role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Told what to do</td>
<td>Autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Told how to do it</td>
<td>Response-ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal distraction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Reasoning and Communication</td>
<td>Level 1 – Concrete/Physical</td>
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<td>Level 2 – Rational/Statistical</td>
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<td>Desirable Worker Attributes</td>
<td>Endurance</td>
<td>Expertise</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Obedience</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Diligence</td>
<td>Initiative-taking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
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</table>
Today, virtually all jobs include a combination of both types of work – manual work and knowledge work – in varying proportions. (See Figure 4.)

For example, executive and R&D jobs, while consisting mostly of knowledge work, include some manual work such as the operation of office equipment, following company procedures, and more. At the opposite extreme, factory equipment operation and product assembly jobs, while mostly manual work, include some knowledge work such as continuous improvement, participating in organisation events and more.

Furthermore, today's manual work, because it is standardised for efficiency and scale, is designed for minimum cost and workers are discouraged from any variance, including attempts to perform above the prescribed standard, even when it is to help the company or impress the boss. For today's manual work, variance of any kind is considered 'waste' and discouraged or even punished. This means there is no way for a worker to demonstrate their full potential, to perform above the required standard, or to earn more than the standard compensation.

Only knowledge work gives workers the opportunity to perform at their highest potential and to create unlimited economic value. Knowledge work is assigned as the responsibility for some opportunity, and with appropriate autonomy, resources, and discretion, the worker is challenged to do their best work and rewarded for what they accomplish.

Consequently, future competitive success will arise primarily from knowledge work and the people performing it throughout.
any organisation. As a result, knowledge work, with its virtually unlimited potential for workers to create discretionary economic value, should be the priority in any job and across any organisation.

This means that work design, worker selection and workplace support must be redesigned to, first, prioritise the knowledge work part of every job and, second, to adopt knowledge work design and management principles, which are substantially different from manual work design and management principles. Failure to make this shift will continue to create unnecessary direct costs and enormous lost opportunity.

Virtually all organisations and management systems are still designed and operated to prioritise manual work, not much different from Industrial Era factories. Even so, this situation has not fazed most executives, as long as their competitors remained trapped in the same outdated management paradigm supported by benchmarking, best practices, trends and other forms of intellectual cover.

There is a new generation of disruptive leaders eager to upset this equilibrium. Your new CEO seems to be among the first wave to be aware of this opportunity, with a mission to seize it.

2) Knowledge work performance is improved by removing or reducing internal barriers and friction

Knowledge work consists primarily of fulfilling responsibilities, capitalising opportunities, meeting challenges and solving problems. Successful knowledge work generally depends on the worker having the specified domain's requisite institutional knowledge (ie, education, training), intuitive knowledge (ie, business acumen), competencies, talents and other related capabilities. Unlike standardised manual work, there is no one to tell the knowledge worker what to do, where to do it, when to do it, or how to do it.

The performance of knowledge work begins with a worker agreeing to accept responsibility for an opportunity or challenge for a specific period. Simultaneously, the worker takes on a defined level of autonomy and authority for decision-making, is given access to various company capabilities and resources, and agrees to create outcomes and other expectations.

The knowledge work found in a job ranges from a basic level – for example, assisting a customer or abiding by workplace culture – to an extremely high level of sophistication – for example, conceiving a new business strategy or imaging a new role for HR. Because the possibilities are endless, here are examples of knowledge work frequently encountered where we work and throughout our daily experience.

- Be a manager's assistant
- Create graphic designs
- Create smartphone apps
- Increase sales of product
- Lead a department
- Improving a business operation
- Be a department supervisor
- Repair cable services
- Be a television journalist
- Provide temporary nursing services

The knowledge work in any job role generally begins with clarifying the responsibility, current situation and agreed expectations, and then creating a plan for achieving success. From this point forward, knowledge work is a matter of implementing the plan, resolving challenges as they arise, and essentially doing whatever it takes to best fulfil the responsibility and thereby create the expected economic value.

The challenges that arise in knowledge work consist of two main types, external and internal. External challenges consist of situations outside the employer's influence that must be overcome or minimised to achieve success. Such challenges are routine for knowledge work and justify why this kind of work is so challenging, requires substantial qualifications, pays well and does not always lead to the anticipated expectations.

Internal challenges consist of situations within the employer's influence. These arise when the autonomy, authority, resources, management systems, or other forms of support by the employer, are not aligned with or sufficient for the knowledge work being performed on the employer's behalf. Unwanted and often
avoidable constraints like these represent friction and barriers that make it more difficult or even impossible for the knowledge worker to achieve success.

For deeper understanding of internal challenges, we can use Kurt Lewin’s ‘Force Field Analysis’ technique to imagine the complex biopsychosocial labour experienced by a knowledge worker, as he/she strives to achieve his/her job’s performance objectives. For example, consider a mid-level staff engineer. (See Figure 5.)

We begin by thinking of this knowledge worker’s job-performance objective to ‘meet management’s expectations’ as their ‘Job Goals’ and listing some typical expectations for a job like this.

To the left of the Job Goal, imagine as ‘Driving Forces’ (aka, internal forces inciting performance) numerous employee needs, wants, and desires – each one a source of value to one or more of life’s domains for this employee – inciting them to perform their job to a level that meets management’s expectations.

Then to the right of Job Goal, consider as ‘Restraining Forces’ (aka, internal forces obstructing performance) the CEO’s list and other employee concerns that, in effect, push back against this knowledge worker’s drive to meet management’s expectations.

For even greater clarity, we can conduct an ethnographic interview of the employee to accurately code each of the Driving Forces and Restraining Forces according to the employee’s needs, wants, and desires involved. This gives us a more complete, in-depth and realistic picture of the knowledge worker’s job experience, and especially the biopsychosocial labour (eg stress, emotion, optimism) they face when their knowledge work is not internally supported, as is the case when all work is supported like manual work.

Most of us have endured a knowledge work experience in which we overcame whatever external challenges were faced to accomplish a goal (eg, secured the customer’s agreement, found needed information), yet faced even greater challenges from internal barriers or resistance caused by our employer’s lack of support for the very goal it was paying us to accomplish. This is a common frustration shared by most employees performing knowledge work, and its principal cause is the neglect of management to replace outdated work design and management systems with the kind of internal support that knowledge work requires.

Part of the good news for HR about the shift to knowledge work is found in the realisation that many of the current impediments to higher performance in knowledge work, are driven by HR policies and processes that were conceived decades ago for managing manual work. HR’s intimate familiarity and ready access to these policies and processes positions HR to lead the transformation of work design and management systems to support knowledge work.

Another piece of good news for HR is the counterintuitive priority for improving knowledge work performance, which calls for removing or reducing Restraining Forces. This runs counter to management’s current emphasis on ‘driving results’ by increasing support knowledge work.

3) HR’s new work for the 21st century is redesigning work, jobs, and management systems to support knowledge work performance

To begin this third point, let us revisit the CEO’s list (Figure 1). We know enough now to appreciate that each item on this list represents an internal challenge (ie, restraining force, source of friction or barrier) that is problem enough for an employee to risk mentioning it to the company’s CEO.

However trivial a list item may seem to us in our role, it potentially stands in the way for the person mentioning it, and for potentially many other knowledge workers in a similar role, of their accomplishing their job or meeting its expectations. This is not just a capricious gripe. It is a business problem, and we can further enable this knowledge worker (and more easily achieve the company’s mission) by treating the comment seriously, and reducing its impact or just removing it from concern altogether.
A question we need to be able to answer, is why does this issue even exist? Is there some important underlying reason why this situation exists? If it is standing in the way of knowledge workers doing their job, then should it not at least be intentional and achieving something valuable?

When these issues are answered, we learn that many exist primarily because no one realised they were creating a business problem. Once identified as a business problem, many of these internal issues can be resolved with minimal effort.

Other issues on the list arise from management systems (eg, performance management, supervision, top-down planning) conceived decades ago for organisations dominated by standardised manual work. Because the work now performed in most people-dependent operations has gradually changed, these hold-over management systems no longer serve a useful function, and frequently create business problems for today’s workers performing knowledge work.

We should be clear. Any internal policy or practice that is not making knowledge work better, faster, easier or smarter, is potentially an obstacle in the way of a company achieving its mission. Furthermore, worker frustration has become ‘the canary in the coal mine’ – the first clue we get that the organisation is somehow making knowledge work lower quality, slower, harder, or dumber than it needs to be.

But what about internal issues that are unavoidable, serve an important purpose elsewhere in the company or exist as a requirement imposed from a business partner, industry, government, or other stakeholders. When this is the case, a clear and convincing explanation is often all that is necessary to reduce or remove the frustration being created for the worker.

Knowledge workers expect challenges in their work. And when the challenges arise from the external environment, they thrive on them and rally their resources to prevail.

It is the internal challenges – when our own organisation puts up or fails to remove or reduce unnecessary obstacles that seem to serve no useful purpose – that frustrate us, deplete our personal motivation and suck our spirit dry. It is the seemingly pointless internal challenges that leave us disengaged and wondering how much better it might be to work for some other company.

Knowledge work design and support
Unlike manual work, which occurs mostly outside of workers, knowledge work occurs mostly within workers. Manual work is typically on display for supervisors to visualise, for standard procedures to be analysed and improved, and for worker performance to be evaluated quantitatively. Knowledge work is a challenge that takes place primarily within a worker’s whole being. It is a one-off process that is intuitively self-directed in real-time, and its results are best evaluated based on the outcome’s value to stakeholders.

Designing manual work for success mostly requires the creation of a standardised, step-by-step physical process, with the equipment and other resources provided, and nearly interchangeable workers inserted into the process as needed. Designing knowledge work for success mostly requires a clear statement of the objective, a clear statement of the worker’s response-ability (eg, accountability, autonomy, authority, and resources), a minimum of internal obstacles and constraints draining energy and motivation (eg, reporting requirement, required approvals), plus whatever support available and
expected to make changes at organisational (eg, management
levels readily accessible to HR and operations managers, who are
needed changes can be made at subsystem and culture
looking for employers that know better.
which will continue to disengage most workers and send the best
inevitable internal barriers and frustrations they will encounter,
knowledge work to secondary importance behind manual work.
knowledge work in all operations at all organisation levels,
worker with optimal Job level and Workplace level culture and
work. Beyond selecting the right people to perform this work,
skills, etc), thus making the worker superior in priority to the
of production (eg expertise, cognitive capacity, relationship
become nearly interchangeable.
Making changes where they matter first
While not wanting to add more complexity than necessary, it is
helpful to recognise how the two innermost subsystem levels
alternate, when the dominant work shifts from manual work to
knowledge work (see right side of Figure 6). For manual work, the
company typically provides the critical means of production, thus
making the work itself superior in priority to the workers who
become nearly interchangeable.
For knowledge work, the worker provides the critical means of
production (eg expertise, cognitive capacity, relationship
skills, etc), thus making the worker superior in priority to the
work. Beyond selecting the right people to perform this work,
the employer's greatest contribution to success is providing the
worker with optimal Job level and Workplace level culture and
any other support the worker finds useful, including removal or
reduction of internal barriers and friction.
Until organisations make this fundamental shift to prioritise
knowledge work in all operations at all organisation levels,
executives relegate their more valuable and often-strategic
knowledge work to secondary importance behind manual work.
Furthermore, they leave their workers unsupported to suffer the
inevitable internal barriers and frustrations they will encounter,
which will continue to disengage most workers and send the best
looking for employers that know better.
Though it is often the case that changes of this magnitude
wait for direction from the top, it is not necessary here because
the needed changes can be made at subsystem and culture
levels readily accessible to HR and operations managers, who are
expected to make changes at organisational (eg, management
systems, work facilities) and operational (eg, work design, worker
selection) subsystem levels. These changes can be expected to have
the desired indirect impact at the two innermost culture levels (ie, 
Job level and Workplace level).

Next steps
You might readily imagine that the Job level culture and 
Workplace level culture, together have the greatest impact on 
workers. It is here to which workers look for guidance and to 
determine how things work in any organisation.

If you do not already have your CEO's list, my suggestion for 
your first step is to identify the more important groups of frontline 
knowledge workers and interview them to create a similar list 
(ie, to learn about the internal issues reducing or slowing their 
performance). A procedure for this interview is described in the 
Autumn 2018 issue of Management Services Journal, 'What's Love 
Got to Do with Management?'.

Your goal should be to assess these issues for their impact and 
then to fix the specific issues that, in the judgement of the workers 
performing knowledge work, are their greatest impediments.
It works best to somehow immediately stop the pain, while 
simultaneously moving quickly (ie, no more than a week or two) 
to pilot test a reasonable alternative in several work groups who
volunteer to participate. This kind of quick intervention is described in the 
Spring 2018 issue of Management Services Journal, 'HR Special Forces'.

As you fix one issue and then the next, you will discover that 
some management systems (eg, performance management,
leadership, knowledge management, compensation) are more of a 
problem than others, and these will be the first entire systems you
should redesign.

If there is a 'bottom line' to this needed shift in management 
systems, it is that creating 'loveable jobs' is the goal, knowledge
worker frustrations are important opportunities for management
system improvement, and empathy will soon become the top skill 
required of managers.

Footnote
In April 2021, HTI will release with Humaneering v4.0 (beta) a
free protocol for the job and workplace culture levels, and for the 
two subsystem levels that border each, so companies can better 
target their initiatives for maximum impact (ie, designed work,
loveable job, intentional worker, and responsive workplace). We
hope to include more about these developments in future issues of 
Management Services Journal.

About the Author
Dr James (Jim) Pepitone is Director of Technology Transfer
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Pepperdine University in California. He can be contacted at james.pepitone@humaneeringtech.com

Management Services Spring 2021
With the advent of life membership we are attracting new members. There are still people who are engaged in management services who are not members and we would like them to join the Institute.

We can use our ‘direct entry’ route to fast track this and information is available from IMS HQ.

We very much hope that our existing members will make potential members aware of this option.

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