



ISM SEMINAR

Autumn Term 2016-17

Speaker: Tony Munton, Independent Management Consultant

Title: How to Turn a Good Manager into a Great One: developing a framework for integration and decision making

Date: Wednesday 30 November 2016

Venue: M2, WBS Teaching Centre

Time: 14:00

Abstract: All businesses are different at the surface; however, all exhibit the same kinds of operational principles and challenges in delivering sustainable value to their shareholders and other stakeholders. The objective of this work is to create a **working** environment that improves management performance by focusing upon what is common – more than 80%; then how this can be extended to support any business. The objective is coherence/integration, transparency and an element of collective discipline - to allow strategy, business design, option analysis and change to be made with greater confidence and objectivity. Secondly, to be an integration base for **collating** up-to-date business fact that underpins day-to-day management and operational decision-making.

By deploying a common foundation across the managed environment the 20% can become the focus - the elements where innovative thinking makes us truly different, creating the most value from the resources and entrepreneurial capabilities that are or could be available.

The purpose of this work is not to deliver more theory – it aims to create an approach that has direct, usable value than can be used by many. It addresses four fundamental management questions:

1. What do managers need to know to create a repeatable, top-down way of supporting **their** decision-making? This must (a) link strategy to operations and back again across all operations and participants and (b) add a “business/value” flavour to support the purpose of investment and its management
2. Can this be built into a generic 80+% definition which addresses the majority of what all require?
3. What is the methodology that first applies this to all types of business and, within reason, to all sizes of activity – major corporations or government functions, SMEs and individual investments; second that adds the custom 20%; thirdly, that maintains the environment as circumstances change?
4. Can this environment be used to steer behaviours through greater transparency?

This approach is not a review of research papers; it is an analysis of 35 years working with major organisations across the world – product creators such as BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce, Ford, BMW, KHI, Mazda and ABB; and product users such as British Airways, the MoD, the RAF, the CEGB, the NHS and BA; as well as my own – IBM and their partners. It has focused upon what managers do and how they do it – in planning, steering, leading and encouraging staff, appraising and above all innovating. All of this is underpinned by a range of decisions, affecting both those within their domain and outside. The question is how to get the decision “right” or as right as the current and perceived circumstances allow. Today everyone has access to programme management or transactional systems; everyone (can) hear what their staff or other stakeholders have to say; however, without an integrated picture of the complete business environment there are a number of unanswered questions:

Project Review - was a given initiative done well – not just to budget and time (however valuable that is) but did it help *its* customer (both internal or external) and contribute to the success of the collective as a whole?

1. What are the implications of project success or failure - who did it affect and by how much, both next in line and downstream? Did it affect brand image? What opportunities failed to realise? What could be done differently in the future? How can we re-use the knowledge gained? Etc.
2. Strategic Review and Planning – where is the business in value terms – both tactically and strategically? How did it get here? What can be done next with the available capabilities? In our current state does the business have the flexibility to change or react to this new competitor? Should the business re-invest in this product-line, partnership, capability or marketplace? Etc.

These questions need a **broad-scale** integrative view of everything that is done – backed up by a set of coherent and contextual fact encompassing everything that is **significant to success**. Management must rise over functional/localised orientations and simplistic, process views of operations. The assessment of success must include both “customer” and “collective” perceptions as well as simple “job done”. In most circumstances, this needs new data in addition to that in our data warehouses – which, today, are full of bottom-up data describing functional “tasks”, not the **net** value they have created. New ways of collecting, finding and analysing this data are required. Above all, it must be collated to suit executives and managers, as well as their staff, helping them make more objective **business** decisions – turning them from “good” to “great”!

Biography:

- *4 years government research on transportation strategy and civil engineering; 31 years IBM – management consultancy, product development and business strategy; 6-7 years post retirement analysis and research*
- *This is an alternative view of management created over many years. It needs academic scrutiny to add to the industrial review already undertaken – does it have the value to take it further?*

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