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Power Steering

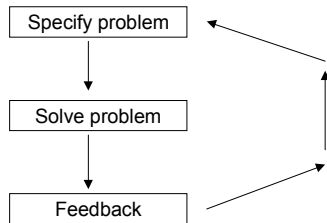
The control cycle:
problems with it,
alternatives to it

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Agenda

- Defects of the control cycle
- Alternatives
- Implementation issues
- Do we need such tools?

Defects of the control cycle



Defects of the control cycle

- It is already programmed into us
- It is trivial
- It is based on maintenance of the status quo
- It does not contain the words 'paradigm' or 'matrix'

Defects of the control cycle

- It is already programmed into us ...
- What do the following have in common?
 - *Star Wars, The Fugitive and Gladiator*
 - *Great Expectations, The Count of Monte Cristo and Moby Dick*
 - *Star Wars, The Fugitive and Gladiator*
 - *Grimms' Fairy Tales, The Thousand and One Nights and Pinocchio*
 - The myths of Ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt

Defects of the control cycle

- All share the same narrative structure
 - Departure
 - Journey
 - Return
- This structure has been studied by many people in many contexts

Defects of the control cycle

- Further breakdown possible
 - 'call to adventure'
 - 'refusal of call'
 - 'supernatural aid'
 - 'crossing the threshold' etc
- Almost all books, films, myths follow this structure
 - Structure has been turned into a 'recipe-book' for aspiring Hollywood screenplay writers

Defects of the control cycle

- Joseph Campbell's "The Hero with a Thousand Faces"
- The "monomyth"
 - *"A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man."*
- So what?

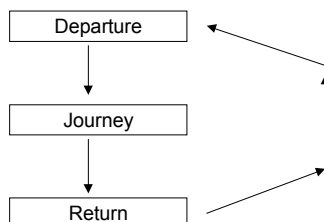
Defects of the control cycle

- Same structure proposed by Jung
 - The heart of the 'collective unconscious' - an inherited set of basic behaviour patterns (Jungian archetypes)
 - Also explains why same structure appears in e.g.
 - Our dreams
 - Initiation rites of obscure civilisations

Defects of the control cycle

- Circular concept of time
 - Measured with reference to planets' motion
 - Plato's definition of time
 - Symbolism of time in various cultures
- Beliefs in the circularity of time
 - Rebirth, resurrection, reincarnation
 - Babylonians, Aztecs, Chinese
 - Stoics, Hindus, Norse

Defects of the control cycle



Defects of the control cycle

- How this works in practice
 - Hero presented with some challenge or problem
 - Hero overcomes the challenge or problem
 - Hero returns in some way improved

Defects of the control cycle

- Return = adjustment
 - *"The objective world remains what it was but, because of a shift of emphasis within the subject, is beheld as though transformed."*
 - The hero returns, adjusts, and is ready to begin again.

Defects of the control cycle

- The fundamental narrative structure common to all cultures is
 - This is the problem
 - Overcome it
 - Return, adjust and begin again
- Gosh, that looks familiar

Defects of the control cycle

- Other defects ...
- The control cycle is founded on repetition with minor alteration
- Problems with this
 - Retention of 'status quo' approach
 - Anchoring
- Will repetition with minor alterations make us thrive - or even let us survive?

Defects of the control cycle

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Alternatives to control cycle

- Thought process used in the military
- Why the military?

Alternatives to control cycle

- The combat appreciation
 - Aim
 - Factors
 - Courses open
 - Plan

Alternatives to control cycle

- The aim
 - Major principle of war is *"the selection and maintenance of the aim"*
 - Need to focus clearly on exactly what we are trying to achieve

Alternatives to control cycle

■ Factors

- What can affect what I am trying to achieve
- How we consider these factors
 - deductions therefrom ... "so what?"
 - or can restate as pertinent risks
- of the control cycle's attitude to risks

Alternatives to control cycle

■ Factors

- Enemy are dug in, therefore I need to use covering mortar fire
- Ground to my right is marshy and therefore a right-flanking attack would be slow and difficult
- I have no smoke grenades left, therefore assault across open ground would be particularly risky

Alternatives to control cycle

■ Courses open

- Led to these by considering factors
- Decide between these courses by considering
 - Extent to which we achieve our aim
 - Extent to which we are exposed to risks

Alternatives to control cycle

- Plan

- Course decided on gives us an outline plan

Alternatives to control cycle

- What if we're in a 'repetitive problem environment'?

- Go through the same process
 - Take account of the previous results

Alternatives to control cycle

- Aim
- Factors
- Courses open
- Plan

Alternatives to control cycle

■ The "Seven Questions" Approach

- What are the enemy (competition!) doing?
- What is my aim?
- What do I need to do?
- How can I best do it?
- What resources do I need?
- How do I need to organise my tasks?
- What control measures do I need?

Alternatives to control cycle

■ The "Mission Analysis" Approach

- What assets are available?
- What are the critical facts and *assumptions*?
- What are the constraints?
- What are my specified tasks?
- What are the implied tasks?

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Implementation issues

- Suppose we want to formally introduce such a tool
 - How do we implement it?
 - Education, CPD
 - Will people use what they think is trivial?

Implementation issues

- How might we structure the use of such a tool?
 - 'Audit trail' for decisions
 - Seems rather academic if we judge by results, not inputs ...
 - ... although an audit trail might help avoid the *"I'm afraid of making the wrong decision, so I won't make a decision"* syndrome
 - Could be a useful structure for group discussions?

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Do we need such tools?

- 10,000 books published in the last three years touting management tools
- One recent survey of senior executives
 - 81% said most management tools promise more than they deliver
- *"They are the modern rain dance"*
- Most tools seem to be restated proverbs
 - *don't put all your eggs in one basket*
 - *he who hesitates is lost*

Do we need such tools?

- Real Options Analysis
 - *Don't put all your eggs in one basket*
- Corporate Venturing
 - *Nothing ventured, nothing gained*
- First Mover Advantage
 - *He who hesitates is lost*
- In Search of Excellence
 - *Stick to your knitting*

Do we need such tools?

Special offer: 216 new tools for free ...

- | ■ Word 1 | ■ Word 2 | ■ Word 3 |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| ■ Corporate | ■ Market | ■ Analysis |
| ■ Strategic | ■ Company | ■ Advantage |
| ■ Dynamic | ■ Mover | ■ Cycle |
| ■ Absolute | ■ Quality | ■ Matrix |
| ■ Kinetic | ■ Production | ■ Focus |
| ■ Decentred | ■ Customer | ■ Value |

Do we need such tools?

- *"Managers, like bored teenagers in high school, have very little interest in what they do, and need something to capture their imagination, away from the repetitive routine of their humdrum existence"*
- *"Managers are a lost, aimless bunch of people, secretly searching for a sense of meaning and direction in their tedious lives."*
- *"Management consultants [wanting] to look as if they are on the cutting edge of management theory. ...The consultants seek to apply them everywhere."*

Do we need such tools?

- Healthcare professionals
 - aren't described by the above paragraphs!
 - are intelligent
 - have common sense

Agenda

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- Conclusion

Conclusion

- Does the profession need the control cycle?
- Is any one tool right for all occasions?
 - Probably not
 - We need a tool-box approach
 - The tools need to be non-trivial

Conclusion

- The 'control cycle' of management fads
 - Discovery
 - Description
 - Popularisation
 - Hype
 - Commitment
 - Defection
 - New discoveries
