



Systems Thinking: Creative Holism for Managers

By Michael C. Jackson

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Too often, today's managers are sold simple solutions to complex problems. But as many soon discover, simplicity is rarely effective in the face of complexity, change and diversity. Despite apparent promise, quick-fix panaceas fail because they are not holistic or creative enough. They focus on parts of the organization rather than the whole, take little account of interaction, and pander to the notion that there is one best solution in all circumstances. As instances of such failure escalate, intelligent managers are increasingly seeking to improve results through Systems Thinking.

Whatever stage you are at in your study of Systems Thinking, this book will help. If you are new to the field then it will serve as a solid introduction. If you are familiar with a few concepts but not with how they can be linked and used by managers, then it will give you a greater understanding of how holistic ideas developed and how to use them in practice. And if you are expert in some approaches but not in others, then it will expand your knowledge and provide you with more choice. In all cases you will achieve competency in creative holism, emerge better equipped to solve complex problems, and ultimately become a more effective Systems Thinking manager.

“It’s neat, easy to read and easy to absorb... It is a boon to students and executives alike..”

J P. von Gigch in Systems research and Behavioural Science

“ ... excellent summary of the latest research findings and ... very clear explanations and accessibility”

“No other recent book in the systems field aims for such an accessible and at the same time rigorous interpretation of the major developments of systems theory”

D. Petkov in Journal of the Operational Research Society

“As far as I can tell there is no other book that includes all the major developments in systems thinking over the last fifty years”

Misha Hebel (Amazon Review)

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Editorial Review

Review

"Provides an excellent guide and introduction to systems thinking for students of management."
(Professional Manager, March 2004)

"...a very important contribution to the management and systems literature for its excellent blend of rigor and relevance..." (Review in the Journal of the Operational Research Society, Vol 56 2005)

From the Inside Flap

Systems Thinking is holistic. Its focus is on ensuring that the parts of the organization function properly together to serve the needs of the whole. It is also creative, because its development has produced a range of approaches that can be used in powerful combinations. Indeed, being systemic increasingly means resolving problems from multi-viewpoints and using multi-techniques. Placing a central emphasis on such 'creative holism', this groundbreaking book draws on a host of examples to cover the development, implementation and integration of all major systems approaches:

Hard Systems Thinking

System Dynamics

Organizational Cybernetics

Complexity Theory

SAST

Interactive Planning

Soft Systems Methodology

Critical Systems Heuristics

Team Syntegrity

Postmodern Systems Thinking

Total Systems Intervention

Critical Systems Practice

From the Back Cover

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Users Review

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Kathryn Richardson:

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Erik Figaro:

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