How To Dramatically Improve Student Satisfaction, Reduce Costs and Increase Staff Morale

Brendan O'Donovan (University of Buckingham PhD student)
Dr Owen Jones

… **only a minority** of social institutions are **consciously designed** while the vast majority have just 'grown', as the **undesigned result of human actions**.

Karl Popper, The Poverty of Historicism, 1957, p. 59

By What Method?

Systems Thinking

How we look at and understand organisations from a customer perspective (Outside In, as a System)
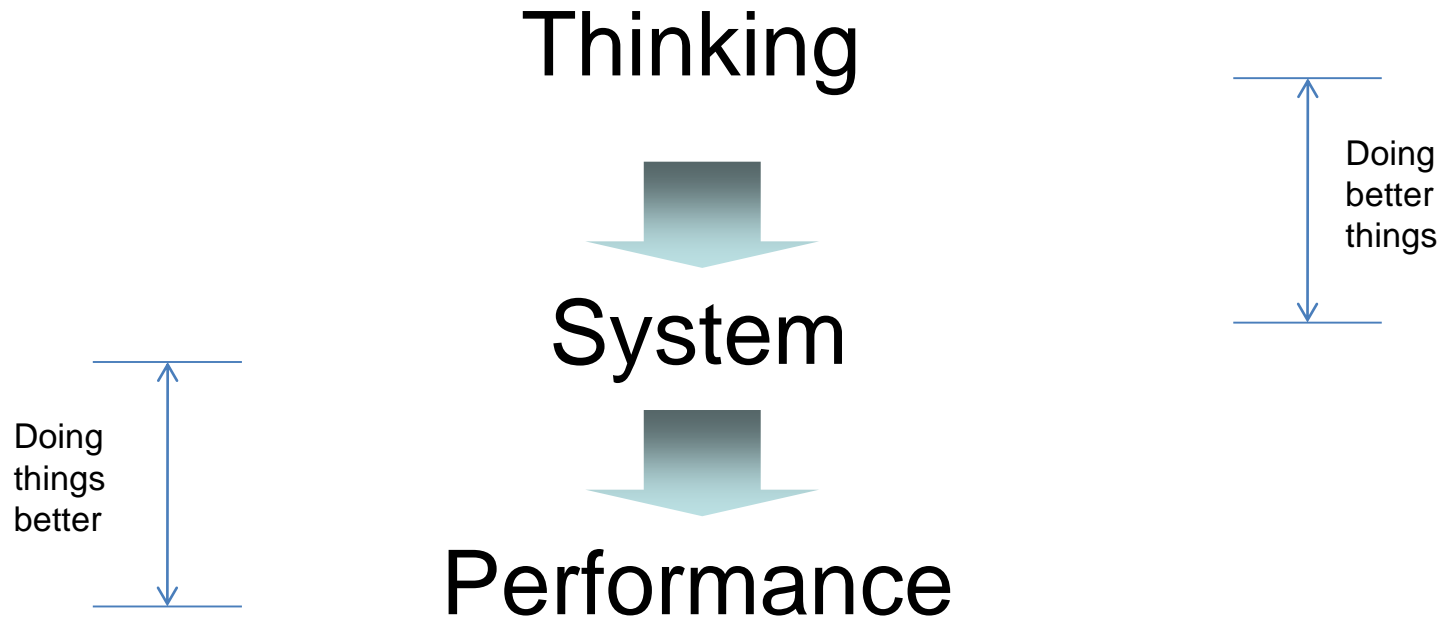
Intervention Theory

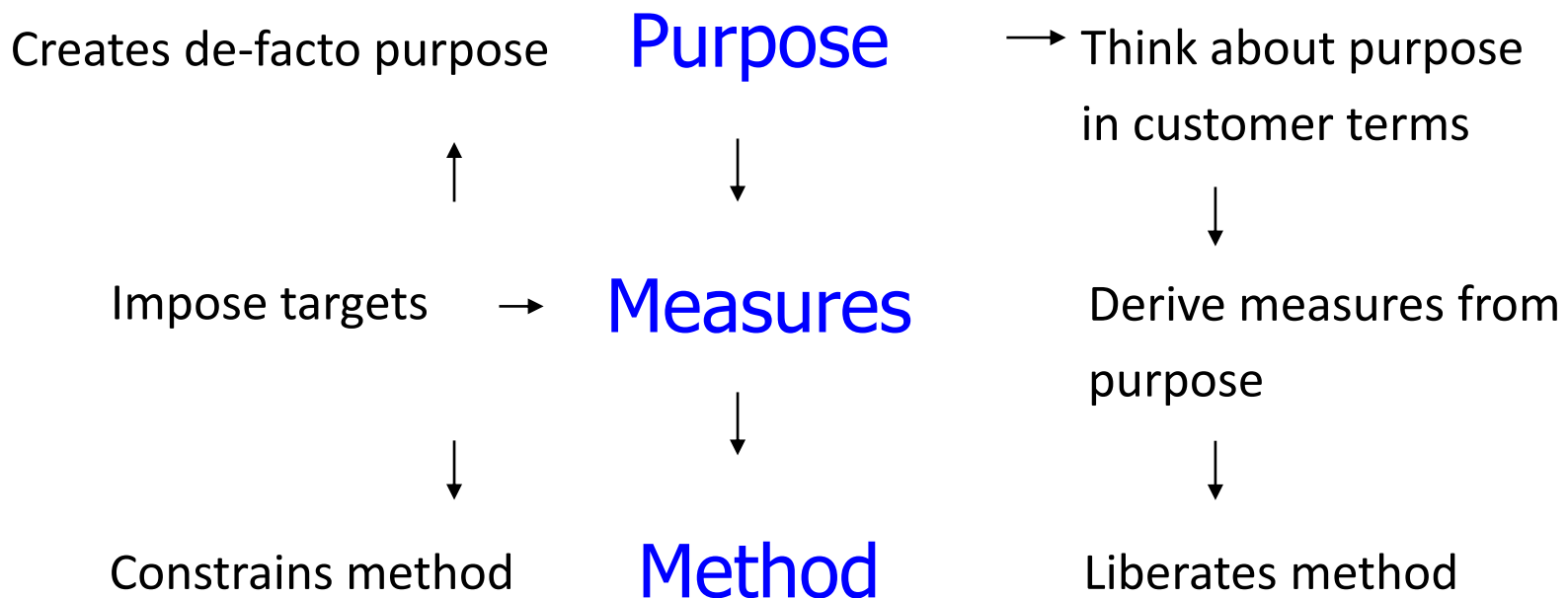The method(s) by which we help change happen within organisations (Unlearn before Learn)

Shared Understanding?

1. What Matters Most to you about your work?

2. What gets in the way?

Thinking Governs Performance

VANGUARD
METHOD

Thinking

⬇

System

⬇

Performance

Doing better things

Doing things better

Purpose, measures, method

Creates de-facto purpose → **Purpose** → Think about purpose in customer terms

Impose targets → **Measures**   Derive measures from purpose

Constrains method   **Method**   Liberates method

Three Methods for Change

Rational

Please agree with my evidence or decision

Coercive

Do this or something bad will happen
Do this and something good will happen

Normative

Unlearn before Learn (Give up and replace)

Chin & Benne, General Strategies for Effecting Change in Bennis, Benne & Chin, The Planning of Change, Klinehart & Winston, New York, 1969

Becoming a student

(Explore different Approaches to the Design and Management of Work)

Applications, registration and enrolment

Purpose

'Hit the targets for registered students and maintain the data, provide information when requested and resolve problems.'

'Provide me with all the facilities, services and information I need to study at your university in the easiest and most simple way.'

Measures

- Targets for student no.s
- Departmental perf management

Derive new measures from purpose and what matters to the student

Method

- Ad hoc procedures had evolved
- Process with 100s of steps
- Passed back 25% of the time
- Over-specifying requirements
- 60% failure demand

Work to new principles

What mattered to students

- Confirm I have a place
- Tell me what facilities are available and how to access them
- Give me a timetable
- Tell me who I need to contact
- Tell me how much and how to pay
- Give me my student card
- Provide me with the type of accommodation I need
- Tell me about what funding/bursaries are available and if I qualify
- Help me with visa requirements
- Make your published information easy to understand and accurate
- Make it easy for me to find my way round campus
- Do it quickly
- Provide me with everything I need to become a fully registered student

The value work

- ❑ I want to apply
- ❑ Make me an offer
- ❑ I choose you
- ❑ Here are my results
- ❑ I want accommodation
- ❑ Provide me with everything I need to become a student

Applications, registration and enrolment

VANGUARD
METHOD

❑ New principles:
- Treat prospective students as individuals
- Build relationships
- Encourage conversation: Skype, phone, visit
- Make it easier for serious applicants
- Design against what matters to the student
- Free up staff to do a great job
- Capture data
- Only ask for the minimum necessary documents
- Admissions tutors on 'pull'

Applications, registration and enrolment

❑ Additional 'what matters' information:

- Access to accommodation for my family
- Help/advice if I am bringing my family
- Instant e-mail access when I arrive to contact home
- Give me a more flexible payment schedule
- Give me an ID card holder
- Give me an invoice and receipt for my payment
- Make round the clock help available when I arrive

Applications, registration and enrolment

❑ Measures:

- Fivefold increase in enquiry to accepted conversion rate
- Application turnaround time – old average of 48 down to 3 days (93% improvement)
- Doubled no. of students rating experience of service as 10/10
- 6 hours and 3 queues to register/enroll - Same process now took 6 minutes, with bespoke welcome pack

What you can do

- ❑ Start with studying your own systems
- ❑ Join our network
- ❑ Speak to an expert

Thanks for Listening

Brendan O'Donovan 07891 578633 brendan@vanguardconsult.co.uk

Owen Jones   07798 696315 Owen.jones@vanguardconsult.co.uk