

Systems Intelligence in Management (High Performing Organizations and People Score High in Systems Intelligence)

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Abstract : Systems thinking has been acknowledged as an important approach in the strategy and management literature ever since the seminal works of Ackhoff in the 1970's and Senge in the 1990's. The early literature was very much focused on structures and organizational dynamics. Understanding systems is important but making improvements also needs ways to understand human behavior in systems. Peter Senge's book *The Fifth Discipline* gave the inspiration to the development of the concept of Systems Intelligence. The concept integrates the concepts of personal mastery and systems thinking. SI refers to intelligent behavior in the context of complex systems involving interaction and feedback. It is a competence related to the skills needed in strategy and the environment of modern industrial engineering and management where people skills and systems are in an increasingly important role. The eight factors of Systems Intelligence have been identified from extensive surveys and the factors relate to perceiving, attitude, thinking and acting. The personal self-evaluation test developed consists of 32 items which can also be applied in a peer evaluation mode. The concept and test extend to organizations too. One can talk about organizational systems intelligence. This paper reports the results of an extensive survey based on peer evaluation. The results show that systems intelligence correlates positively with professional performance. People in a managerial role score higher in SI than others. Age improves the SI score but there is no gender difference. Top organizations score higher in all SI factors than lower ranked ones. The SI-tests can also be used as leadership and management development tools helping self-reflection and learning. Finding ways of enhancing learning organizational development is important. Today gamification is a new promising approach. The items in the SI test have been used to develop an interactive card game following the Topaasia game approach. It is an easy way of engaging people in a process which both helps participants see and approach problems in their organization. It also helps individuals in identifying challenges in their own behavior and in improving in their SI.

Keywords : gamification, management competence, organizational learning, systems thinking

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