

MICHAEL CARDINAL – TEKSYSTEMS

Q: How does the structure of the organization enable (or not) people?

A: We no longer live in the age of command and control, we live in an age of networks, and the only ones that still need C&C are churches and the military. Effective management of people is done in C&C, and while that may be appropriate for some, it's important to look at the combination of talents that your people have and build your organization around that, rather than building an organization and trying to squeeze people into that. Eventually, you can find a hybrid of command and control, but also have some kind of freedom within your teams.

Q: Can you please explain "Near Win" a little further?

A: I shoot the arrow at the target, and I hit it once, but it's not all about that, you have to hit it over and over again. What you're doing is not even thinking about what you're doing, but your body and mind kind of just take over. We call this "mental muscle memory". To do that, you have to stay sharp. You have to use your talents and muscles to stay sharp, if you don't, you may begin to forget. If you want to master something, you have to constantly be pushing yourself right to that edge. The near win is setting yourself up for a goal, almost meeting it, but continually trying to achieve it.

Q: Any comments on Ed Deming's words about management being the primary source of process variation? How can we possibly succeed when management prevents us from success?

A: You have to understand what Deming meant by "management". He did not necessarily mean management in an organizational structure, but more what we talk about as process owners and managers. It's the person who owns the process, or manages the process, that is ultimately accountable for making sure that's successful. What they've got to do is recognize it's not just you. You're not the only one who improves the process. It's a team of people that have to make this work, but, ultimately it will fall on you as the owner/manager. It's not the individual effect of a person on something that makes it better. It's really more about the team and the team effort. You have to fix the system to make things successful, and that requires people.

Q: How do we link the people concept with people, technology process concept of outsourcing? Do we really all agree outsourcing is successful from "PEOPLE" perspective?

A: If you read best practices, it really indicates that outsourcing isn't a bad model if you use it correctly, but most people aren't using it correctly. It shouldn't be a money decision. It should be the core talents and services that your organization has. What you should keep is your core talents and skills. Focus on what's best for you, and outsource something that is not your core. For example, an AppDev company stays with app development and outsources something like Human Resources. Unfortunately, we usually do it by the bottom line.

Q: Any comments on a potential evolution for specialization of labor in the form of Tasks at all levels of the organization). Everything as a request or incident and you get paid by completing or creating tasks, including managerial and executive levels?

A: You'd have to look at that in the scope of an organization and if they're capable of doing that. Does your organization have the talents and skills for that? Before going down that path with an organization, you'd have to look to see if the organization could handle that. I do think that it is possible, with the caveat that not everyone is a task oriented individual. I would look to manage work based on the talents and personalities of individuals and accommodate their work style and preferences, rather

than a “one size fits all”. If you look at “tasks” more figuratively and see them as mechanisms for holding people accountable and responsible without focusing on the mechanism, then it is definitely a good idea.