Intentions

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Project Management Fundamentals

With permission of Jim Blair – Paladin Project Management
Goals and intentions are responsible for human behavior.

Higher or harder goals will result in higher levels of effort toward performing the goals.

Specific goals are seen as resulting in higher levels of effort than vague goals.
Before the project begins an intentions analysis will provide additional management insight concerning the project.

An intentions analysis will provide answers to the questions of:
- What is wanted from the project and by whom?
- Why it is wanted (or its significance)?
- How to go about managing the project as a result?
Intentions
Bounded Rationality

- In 1957, Simon proposed the notion of **Bounded Rationality**
- Bounded rationality is the property of an agent that behaves in a manner that is nearly optimal with respect to its goals as its resources will allow
- Bounded rationality is rationality as exhibited by decision makers of limited capabilities
- We are all Cognitive Mizers
- Satisficing is a term used to suggest finding a minimum threshold of satisfaction.
Intentions

Bounded Rationality (Satisficing)

- Calculated Thinking
  - A part of a rational process. Actions are taken with specific outcomes preferred.
  
  *This is what I want...so, this is what I’ll do...*

- Systemic Thinking
  - Rational justification for actions or decisions are observed from the present outcome reality. The history of individual acts has provided a current state that prevails in ways that are lost from explicit reason.

  *Well, having arrived here, I believe I took that action because it led me in this direction.....hmmm...*
Intentions

Calculated Thinking further Classified

- Limited
  - Can’t consider all the alternatives in time or quantity
- Contextual
  - Certain alternatives present themselves in context that make them more likely to be chosen. (group think)
- Game
  - Preference is given by hedonic consideration (winning).
- Process
  - An alternative is chosen because the process of choosing it makes it more appealing.
Intentions

Systemic Thinking further Classified

- Adaptive
  - The choice has been learned through a process of adaptation or previous experience.

- Selected
  - An environment has been created that makes a choice more likely, usually without explicit consideration. What we would naturally do. (social regulation)

- Posterior
  - Justifying our intentions to act by their outcomes. Since it happened, I must have intended it to happen.
Intentions

Bounded Rationality

- Calulated Thinking
  - Limited rationality (limited capacity)
  - Context rationality (externality induced)
  - Game rationality (personal motives)
  - Process rationality (personal preference)

- Systemic Thinking
  - Adaptive rationality (learned)
  - Selected rationality (reflexive default)
  - Posterior rationality (rationalization)
Intentions

World Views

- The results of an intentions analysis will give the project an overall position and the PM more realistic expectations.
- The systems framework implies that one should “look up” or “out” to understand your position.
- Discover the suprasystem within which the current system and project resides.
  - What is the organizational reality (suprasystem) of which project management is a part?
- There are multiple ways to characterize the suprasystem, or world, within which the project resides.
- Or, you could say it resides in multiple worlds where each world has a way of interpreting what the project is.
Intentions

World Views

- Environment
- Project
- People

World of:

- Strategies: Decision
- Methods: Task
- People: Interaction

Interaction
## Intentions

### World Views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World</th>
<th>Primary Elements</th>
<th>Key Processes</th>
<th>Related Characteristics</th>
<th>Overall Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Machines</strong></td>
<td>Technologies</td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Quality Efficiencies</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
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<td>Operational tactics</td>
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<td>Inventions</td>
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<td>Product oriented representations</td>
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<td>Diffusion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Numbers</strong></td>
<td>Financial results</td>
<td>Computation</td>
<td>Bottom line</td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Strategy)</td>
<td>Quantitative representations</td>
<td>and Analysis</td>
<td>Variation</td>
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<td>Measures for planning</td>
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<td>Market Place</td>
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<td><strong>People</strong></td>
<td>People</td>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
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<td>Groups</td>
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<td>Identity</td>
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<td>Cultures</td>
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<td>Motives</td>
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Intentions

Classification of Intentions

- Three questions are helpful in identifying the intentions:
  - What is wanted from the project and by whom?
  - What is the significance of the project? Why is it wanted?
  - How should decisions/choices be made about the project? What are the choice principles involve?
The world view of a stakeholder relates to the significance of the project from his/her world of predominant concern. People, Processes or Strategy......

Goals and bounded rationality relate to the choice principles for the project that these people make with their context.

Results from these questions will reveal an intention for

- Experimental action,
- Process improvement,
- Strategic impact, or
- Cultural change.

We examine these four intentions by looking at the Change Impact expected and the Specificity of the outcome.
Intentions

Four Classes of Intentions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Specificity</th>
<th>Low Specificity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>Culture</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Change Impact

- Low
- High
## Intentions
### Basis of Intentions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intention</th>
<th>Want</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Choice Principle</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>Discovery Improvement</td>
<td>Systemic</td>
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<td>Improvement World: Unknown</td>
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<td>Process</td>
<td>Efficiency Effectiveness</td>
<td>Cost Quality</td>
<td>Calculated</td>
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<td>World: Machines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>Business Impact</td>
<td>Business Advantage</td>
<td>Calculated</td>
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<td>World: Numbers</td>
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<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Organizational Change</td>
<td>Assumptions Remodeling</td>
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<td>World: People</td>
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</table>
## Intentions

### Intentions and Project Dynamics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intention</th>
<th>Project Planning</th>
<th>Requirements Discovery</th>
<th>Review Level</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>Set up Environment</td>
<td>Unfolding</td>
<td>Cyclical or Only at End</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Detail tasks</td>
<td>Analysis and Design</td>
<td>Scheduled at Tasks</td>
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<td>Strategic</td>
<td>Milestones</td>
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<td>Assumptions Surfacing</td>
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<td>Actual Intentions</td>
<td>Assumed Intentions</td>
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Intentions

Assumed and Actual Intentions

- Intentions of projects may change over time
- Progressive exposure of a project to various stakeholders may result in a change in their expected outcome
- Management of a project should change as the intentions change
- Managing a project from the perspective of unrealistic intentions (expectations) could lead to disaster
- In relating assumed intentions to actual intentions any mismatch will present extreme difficulties for the project manager
- Principal stakeholders must be aligned in their intentions
Intentions
Application of Intentions

- Project Intentions is the second filtering parameter that can be used to bring into awareness those other parameters that are most important to consider.
- Provides a place to start
- Initiates communication
  - Between leader of the project and principal stakeholders
  - Between leaders and their teams
- Provides a mechanism for feedback
- Provides a way to identify action possibilities
- Used as input to an action plan
- Must be monitored for ‘current reality’ throughout project
## Parametric Analysis

### Parameter Interactions

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<th>G*</th>
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<th>Organization Context</th>
<th>Organization Style</th>
<th>Team Structure</th>
<th>Kind of Team</th>
<th>Intentions</th>
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* G – Given; D - Determine

What do we know or can determine from these,

that provides information or insight for these?
## Intentions

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