

Defining The Compleat Biz

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How we are going to proceed

Having gone through all the thinking and indeed some of the hard work set out in the previous chapters, we should be able to define what our Compleat Biz is. The next two chapters set out a framework and the process for building it.

As you will recall, one of the key points to bear in mind is that **our** Compleat Biz need not necessarily look like any other. So we will need to bring together various ideas and elements that we have produced along the way to see the overall picture. This is not just the Jigsaw Lid but also the other visions and agreements on how the different components will work for us.

We will know how we view the components, such as Marketing and Information Systems. By whom and where we want our strategy developed. And a notion of how we want our shareholders and other stakeholders to behave once we have engaged them in the model. We also know whom we should be entrusting with the Business Design or at least how to get to that group.

We have to start by working out what we want. This will give us a picture of what we think our Compleat Biz will be like. From this we will be able to answer questions that will help us to understand when we have reached our Compleat Biz.

The underlying thesis

The high level model by which the organisation is managed is not a board and reporting managers. It is an integrated group with a bunch of people acting as facilitators. In some ways this is much more like the model of democracy of ancient Greece. And anyone who studies modern politics will tell you that is a long way from representative democracy with elected members.

If you think hard you will see that what we have been proposing just wouldn't work if we elected a group to come up with a design and then accepted that as fact.

Instead we have to be prepared to debate. To challenge. To see alternate solutions evolve. Most important of all we have to trust the process. Don't take the results and tinker with them to reach some personal view - that goes against everything we stand for.

Skills requirements and the differences from traditional roles

Some serious thought is needed here. Are we reasonably sure that we have the right skills and attributes lying around? If the answer is "Yes" then it is empowerment that will release them.

On the other hand, if the answer is “No” the ability of people to let go and float will be severely restricted.

Of course to be able to answer the question in the first place you must have an idea of what skills/attributes you think you will need. My own shopping list goes something like this:

- Facilitation - there need to be a few people who are good at this, you can't rely on one person to do it all.
- Mentoring - think of who is going to need this and who you will get to provide it.
- Co-ordination - this whole event is going to need a shepherd to bring things together.
- A couple of good note-takers. Self-evident really. We must be sure that what has been said and agreed is accurately noted. Otherwise we may allow mistrust to creep in.
- Some basic skills in business/organisational strategy. Not every small business has these. Even big organisations tend to keep this on the Executive Floor! We want these available to us.
- Business redesign vision. It will be no good starting all these without having at least one person around who can articulate what the outcome looks like in organisational terms. Over time this becomes easier for everyone.
- Willingness to participate.
- A sense of the ridiculous. A rounded sense of humour.
- A group with shared values - not a group responding to imposed values.
- A good listener in each of the key stakeholder groups - who will act as a sounding board and help you to frame the communications.
- Enthusiasm
- Team players - we don't need/want prima donnas here.
- An ability to listen.
- Focus - to concentrate on why things are the way they are and how we want them to be. The ability not to get distracted is very important. You must not confuse this with an ability to be inquiring and to allow new options to be discussed. But it helps to know the difference between that and pure distraction.
- Allowance for uncertainty.
- An ability to respond with permission. Is the natural response “Yes *and...*” rather than “No *but...*”?

You will have noticed these are rather more attributes than skills. This reflects a more open approach required of the people.

If you really haven't got the raw material - go and hire some. Bed the newcomers into the organisation in one or two places **before** starting the revolution. Some preparation doesn't go astray. Don't forget that this is the long view we are embarking on. Also reflect on the need for some selective evolution (see Chapter 7). Note that hiring may mean internal transfers of people rather than new kids on the block.

Key groupings in The Compleat Biz Model

There are only a few of these but we have to get them right. If we don't then the whole building may collapse around our ears...

First there is the need for some **Reference Leadership**. I know I haven't used this term before but it deals with the notion that whatever we do will need some sponsorship. Whether that is from the CEO or Chairman or, preferably, another relatively senior figure. The cause

needs an individual champion at the beginning. Over time the core group will take this on. However this isn't a traditional sponsor's role hence the difference in name. There are arguably two roles to be filled. The traditional sponsor (identified early on) will help you get things moving. Then the Reference Leader may provide a sounding board and help with doing things better. This is not necessarily the same person in both cases.

It may help to like this to the difference between the Course Professor and a Tutor with a university class. The former equates to the sponsor. The latter is the Reference Leader who helps to steer the students to where they need to be to satisfy both themselves and the Prof.

Next is our initial group - the Error! Reference source not found.. You will need to select the initial few very carefully to ensure that a mix of attributes from the shopping list is there.

Beyond that there is another group that you might like to consider. These are the technical specialists. As the custodians get on with building the initial view - who are they likely to need to consult with on technical matters? Having an idea of likely targets means you can make sure that you have identified those who might prove very difficult before the project has had chance to gather momentum. That doesn't mean you will want the custodians to avoid contacting these people - but being prepared isn't a bad thing.

Next, we will need to have some helpful Customers or their representative(s). After all we are going to need to bring them into the discussions.

The same applies to Suppliers. Being sure that this isn't going to expose you to manipulation is a consideration here. Which of your suppliers do you trust sufficiently to be able to be so open with when the time comes?

That should be it. No review panel. No committee or project board. As we already know - this is going to be an evolution that will build its own structures. So don't make the mistake of putting false ones in place at the outset. That will only foul things up.

Setting them up

How easy can it be? Once you have identified who should be in which group you have a template.

Start by getting the potential Custodians together. Invite them informally to discuss an idea. Make it relaxed and open.

It may be useful to start by asking a question about what an ideal organisation might look like. Challenge the initial responses - but not too hard. We want to make the group feel comfortable with exploring avenues that until now they may never have considered. Generally the first reactions will be to copy some other organisation they have read about - without understanding the underlying detail. As I am sure you have already guessed - that isn't a very useful template because it doesn't go deep enough.

However for the purposes of getting a discussion going it is a good place to start. You can get them to probe the suggested ideal model and raise questions of their own. At that point you have the beginnings of your core grouping and over a few meetings they will begin to feel comfortable working together and exploring ideas. Progressively you can introduce them to the concepts I have set out in the earlier chapters.

The other groupings are more likely to be a case of having prepared some thoughts. After all it is the Custodians who will need the information and will approach them.

The one key piece is to identify the sponsor. Since **you** are working this out - whom else should it be? I cannot imagine anyone better qualified. Of course if you don't feel you have the power base to get things rolling then you may want a senior shoulder to lean on. That's fine - so who do you talk to on sensitive matters now? Go discuss it with them and ask for help.

How are the communications structures going to be different?

After all that has been said so far about communications and openness this has to be brief!

Our communications structures **will** be different. Demonstrably so. They will be shorter and more direct. We will combine visual with verbal. Action-based and example-setting. Talking with **not** talking to. And with greater consistency across everything. That's it.

Reflect on what this means for you. Critique your style and make sure that as you start the whole process you personally adopt the new structures all the time - even in your everyday communications around the business. That way people will not think that what you say to the custodians is somehow false. Just be careful not to 'change your clothes' so dramatically that people think there is something wrong! So you might want to do a few things slowly before you kick off the initial group meeting. That way it won't be a complete surprise to everyone.

When should we set about defining our Compleat Biz?

There's no time like the present. If you have gone through the checklist above there should be nothing stopping you. We want to see the Error! Reference source not found. and then the rest will start to follow.

So - what are you waiting for? I can't do it for you... although the next chapter might give you some assistance.