The Integration Model

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Laying out the components

So we have an assortment of pieces that we are going to use to build our integrated model. However there are quite a lot of them and there is one thing that you need to know. In this construction kit, you have to use **all** the parts. Leaving some out is not an option. Moreover, this kit does not come with a standard set of assembly instructions!

Here they all are.

<div align="center">

Open Floor   **Jigsaw Lid**   **D Cord**   **DIRFT Spiral**
Cross-Education   **Collective Intuition**   **Custodians**
Reference Leadership   **Setting a policy of openness**
Solution Validation   **Allowance for Uncertainty**

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Imagine what you would do if, as a child, you had come across a box full of interesting bits that appeared to assemble into something quite wonderful. As a boy I actually had such a box. It contained most but not all of the parts to build a model biplane. It was made out of tinplate and probably dated back to the 1930s. I'm neither sure where it came from nor indeed what ultimately happened to it. However I was fascinated by its potential. Unfortunately it had no instructions but I used to try assembling it in different ways to see if I could get it to work.

Here we have a box. It contains some peculiar parts. We may imagine the wonderful things we can build with it but what are we going to do?

Returning to the ideas of Open Space Technology for a moment we know that **whoever comes is the right people**. We can translate this into **whatever bits there are, are the right bits**. And knowing this we can be certain that we have no missing pieces (unlike my biplane).
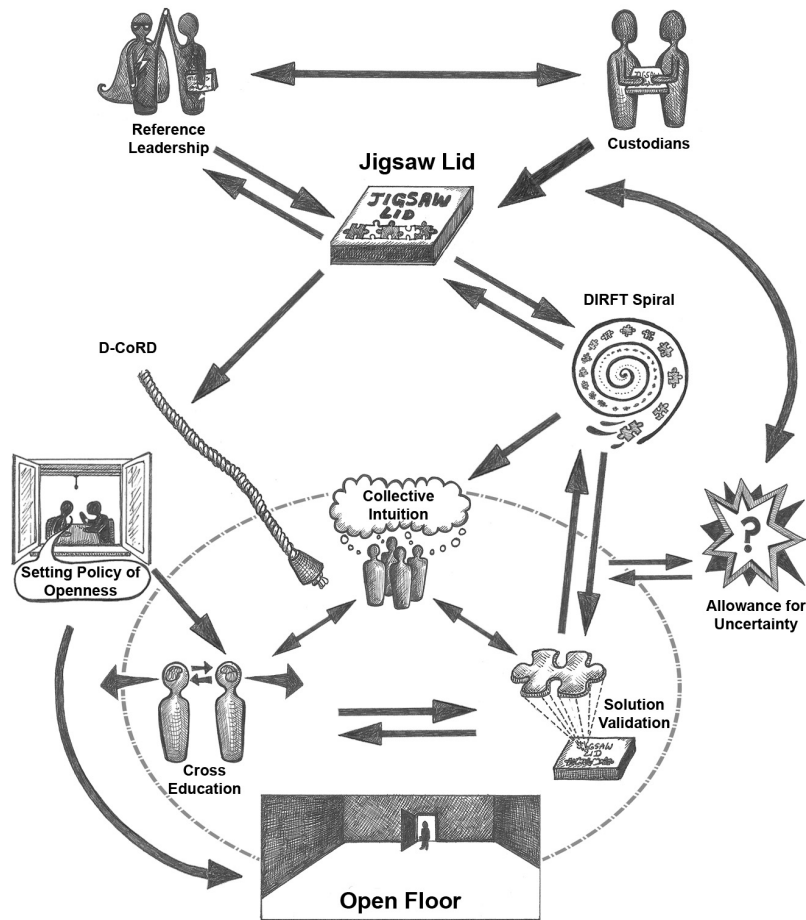
We need to adopt the ideals of best practice model-making. (You know the plastic variety - with lots of parts, paint, transfers and glue…) We need to be clear what the various bits are before we start putting them together. Failure to do so can mean we assemble bits that we will have to break apart to let them fit with others - and so it goes on.

This isn't as frivolous as it sounds. You will not get too many chances to make this work. Believe me - the cynics out there will be itching to roast you if it doesn't deliver to your predictions. But the best answer to such people is to do it right first time. Now where did I mention that before? Neat how the philosophy informs how the philosophy should develop isn't it? In fact the biggest threat is lack of preparation. Get that right and there won't be too many cynics lurking in the wings anyway.

Anyway - back to our box of bits. The right bits and the only bits. The next step in model-making is to work out what fits with what and what has to be assembled first. Helpful kits include a detailed instruction booklet - that you ignore at your peril. I can't offer you that in detail, there are simply too many variables at work. However, to help you with this stage, the next section deals with…

A plan through the maze

Below is a slightly crazy vision of how the components interlink. To understand it better you should refer once more to what each part is doing.

To help you the following pages are where the components were first discussed:

The area within the dotted line indicates where most of the "work" is going on once the Jigsaw Lid has been produced. The whole is underpinned by the Open Floor for communication and ideas.   And don't forget - **YOU** are in there somewhere, guiding things and providing encouragement. (By the way have you noticed how just about everything is connected to everything else?   It really does emphasise the shift from the normal way we run business which tends to be far more linear.)

How the organisational elements should inter-link.

Within the model there need also to be linkages between the elements of the organisation. Principally these are Marketing, IT and Operations although there could be others.

For the purposes of this book I've ignored Finance. It is generally a supporting function not a driver. It delivers the financial controls irrespective of what the organisation does or how it goes about its business. Of course if Operations **are** Finance then it's a different matter entirely.

So back to the triumvirate. It should be pretty clear by now that Marketing resources can help a great deal with strategic thinking. So you would expect to see them represented in the Collective Intuition piece as well as perhaps helping with communications. They can put you in touch with the Customers as well - via the Sales arm or their Customer Relationship people.

I would expect the IT people to be more heavily involved as technical experts. Get them to talk to you in layman's terms about what their technologies can do, as well as what they can't. One of the great cries these days is that the IT architecture should be open and supportive. That means these guys **ought** to be on the ball about what sorts of things you could expect. On the other hand if they have historically been ignored in this type of discussion, then expect some wobbles as they come to terms with what you want. Experience shows that the brightest of IT planners are occasionally in an ivory tower of their own!

One thing that you should pay attention to is that Marketing doesn't often have the best of relationships with the IT department. Partly this is cultural. Marketers are, by nature, step change innovators. And they want everything done yesterday. Technologists tend to like a little more order and procedure in their lives. But for **this** little adventure you need them talking in open communications with the rest of your team. That may mean that you need to do a little preparation. Find out where things have been good and bad between them in the recent past. Work out ways of avoiding the same pitfalls in your own negotiations.

Operations can be a big or a little piece - it rather depends on what they are actually 'operating'. Typically I would expect to see some HR interventions here - not least because organisational change is usually within their domain of influence. And what is very clear is that organisational change **is** going to be a major factor in what you deliver. It will go right to the heart of the culture.

In turn this may mean that it is Operations who will be faced with the biggest shift in culture or the way things are done. The last thing they will want is it all to be a surprise sprung from on high or from below for that matter. So there will need to be a lot of effort made to ensure their representatives are both the right people and have the support to bring their colleagues along with them.

In essence you need to be clear that Marketing, Operations and IT are all brought into the picture together. They must be allowed time to get to grips with what is being developed. It is not acceptable for any one of them to block the proposals on the basis of their own turf being infringed. So at the outset be prepared to make that clear - in the friendliest way of course! They are as much in this as anybody and we want them to come on-side.

This may mean that these different groupings have to develop a new way of working together. No longer are we in the usual realms of IT developing supporting technologies in isolation from a culture shift. The culture shift will hit them just as much as anyone else. Marketing are no longer going to be the sole arbiters of how we interface with the customer. OK - I know that's a rash statement because things are more subtle than that in practice but you get my drift. Times are a-changing on all fronts and by the way *"can Operations please keep the wheels on the bus?"* It is possible for things to get more than a little chaotic - at least for a while.

That is a good reason for ensuring that all of the major players start to develop ways of working through this. They need to think about what they currently do and find ways of dual-tracking until the revised culture and processes take hold.

Who does what

There's no right or wrong answer here. We know that because we have a group of Custodians they will guide a lot of what we do initially. So it really depends on who you get to participate. I make no apologies for being rather vague here. It's simply that there is no way to generalise.

Perhaps the best way to understand this is to adopt a rule of *"whoever feels right does it"*. That at least fits with the Collective Intuition aspect and if people are happy that it feels right then it probably is. It's not uncommon for some real stars to shine in unexpected places when this sort of exercise is underway. Afterwards people will reflect and admit that with a lot of forethought they would never have imagined that Claire or Yousef would be such brilliant performers. So allow yourself and everyone else to be surprised. Step Up! Step Up! There's plenty of room here for reputations to be made. But don't forget to leave the personal agendas behind.

Instead remember that somebody has to have an overview of what you are doing and where it is all going. That does not mean they are in charge but simply that there needs to be someone who can steer things back on course from time to time. After all the other participants have never been here before - so unless they have read this book as well, they probably have no concept of what is going to be needed.

Creative steps to deliver the space

"So," you say, *"it's all very well knowing what needs to be done. But how is one supposed to create the space to allow it to happen?"* We know that there are a number of elements that need time and energy to put in place. What else can we do to help them along?

First you need to be clear what authority you already have. It is probable that, as a reader of this book, you aren't already sitting near the top of the corporate ladder. If you are then you will already know how to tap into resources to bootleg some ideas. For the rest, here are some further thoughts:

Make people want to participate.

People have an innate curiosity about things that are new. Some people more so than others. The problem you face is getting the right bunch of people to participate up front. Perhaps you could run a separate exercise to identify some likely candidates. Advertise an incubator day/session that is intended to come up with new ideas for an existing process. See who volunteers and who hangs back. Try and work out why each is behaving as they do. You will run the session and get some feedback on the interactions as well. Then use the information to invite the 'right' group to your initial meeting on the Compleat Biz at a later date. Being invited to something makes people feel special and they are more likely to participate actively. You can also think creatively around how you name your initial meeting. What title is going to attract the guys you want with you at the beginning? Something wacky? Something very serious? I prefer the idea of calling it something like a Business Incubator. Sufficiently serious but with a tinge of unusual that gets people intrigued and intrigued is good!

Calling it Project Phoenix or some such idea is probably counter-productive. You are not starting a project, you are engaging in subverting culture to something better. And projects have to have budgets and deliverables. You may also find that they are required to present a case for approval before anything happens. Not helpful to you - as I can't see many Project Boards approving the Compleat Biz, they simply wouldn't understand it. Budgets and deliverables will appear in due course but not until the thinking has been done. Right now you just want to find a group of helpers who will get the core going.

Arrange to free up some resource for a 'think-tank'

Have a quiet word with a senior member of the organisation and ask them if they would 'sponsor' a think-tank to look at ways of doing things better. Be prepared to be open about where this may lead by saying that you have studied some new business philosophy and you want to understand how it works in practice. The Think-Tank will help you do that and as a by-product may come up with some ideas that are worth pursuing. Most senior people approached in this way will cut you a little slack and see what comes of it. What have they got to lose? If it works, they get credit. If it doesn't then they are not threatened - the status quo is seen to be working!

Challenge something that is obviously wrong and not working.

Even working things out on your own you may have come up with some ideas of how a Compleat Biz should operate for you. That's perfectly OK. Now the question is *"What bits of the current operation are obviously broken and where might a Compleat Biz fix be easy?"*

Here's an interesting example. A boutique management consultancy[1] was seeking to expand in Scotland. Their core UK operations were based around vertical markets, with the exception of the northern office that covered everything they did in the region. Getting the management to agree on what was the best way to develop the business met with a dilemma. Should they focus on sector specialisation or make sure that, in the northern office, new consultants fitted a more general mould to support the multi-role there? In a Compleat Biz - they would have known instantly which way to go and why. Instead narrow issues got in the way and the recruitment process got into a tangle. Even the head of recruitment couldn't predict the answer. However it would have been fairly easy to take apart the development process and build a Jigsaw Lid that dealt with the problem.

You may want to ponder this for a while. It would be pretty unusual for any organisation not to have broken parts. Finding some that could readily be the subject of Compleat Biz approaches needs you to do your homework. So what I suggest is that you start scanning for them even before the whole thing takes off. That way you may have some likely candidates once you have assembled your initial group for the core team. It may also help you to identify willing participants who are suffering and want to see change occur.

Try bits in another related organisation.

Maybe you don't run the department where you work but you do help to run the Sports & Social Club. Is it possible to pilot bits of the Compleat Biz there? Engaging all the stakeholders to produce a better operating model. Trying out the Communications ideas. Being clear about how you deal with staff members who **don't** want to participate (this is a good way of trialling how to leave people behind without making either party feel uncomfortable). Look at outsourcing with partners that will produce the right answers for both sides (see Chapter 2). The Social Club isn't the only candidate for the related organisation. Business networking groups; industry panels; professional associations and others all offer possibilities. If it can be shown to work there with similar people and related business issues - then there is a case for bringing it in-house. What constitutes 'it' is a different question. That is down to you to decide what aspect you want to pilot in this way.

Create a new division.

Develop something that operates as a Compleat Biz and reverse it into the group once it is up and running. This is possible if you already hold a position of influence. Heads of Departments may have the freedom to set up new cells. If that is you - then why not use the option to try something? It also means you can get to choose who plays and who doesn't. At the beginning it will help to ring-fence the Custodians from the known critics and spoilers. We all have them around and it isn't wrong to exclude them whilst things are being incubated.

Become the guru.

Seriously, have you thought what that might mean? People look up to all sorts of individuals who are seen as having real insight into life the universe and everything. Lifestyle gurus. Management gurus. Technical gurus. The list goes on. But within your organisation who are the gurus? Why is that? What is it they understand better than other people?

Take this as your starting point and see if you can catch the coat tails of one of them. Be seen as their disciple in some regard. But be sure that what they are seen as understanding

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[1] Boutique consultancies are generally relatively small and offer highly-specific expertise. This is in competitive response to the larger consultancies that are more broadly-based.

is **relevant** to the Compleat Biz view of the world. This may be an underhand way of getting your ideas forward but nobody said that you have to be obvious from the start. Beware the possibility that you are seen as having a personal agenda that corrupts the existing messages. That will end in tears and is going to damage your chances of delivering the Open Floor later on… However there may be an opportunity to follow an existing guru within your organisation and at least understand why they are highly regarded. Nothing wrong with a bit of creative swiping is there?

Keeping a Diary

Whilst all the activity is going on I recommend that you start to keep a diary or log of what happens and when. This isn't for posterity. Rather it's to help you to understand where you are at any one time. What you have done, what has been achieved, what is proving difficult. It may give you insights at future points into how things worked or didn't. After all you don't have an existing model to benchmark with so it is up to you to help yourself.

It will also be helpful in later stages to explain to wider groups what you went through. What the issues were and how they were addressed. After all in The Compleat Biz there is no need to keep this a secret. On the contrary we want people to understand why we are the way we are. Having a record of how we got there is a valuable aid.