

CYCLOPRAXIS BUILDERS

By Doug Johnson / doug_johnson@djhome.net / Revision 7.7 / Aug 14, 2006

CycloPraxis has been established as a useful method of identifying and matching work styles to the needs of a business unit as the business develops from an idea, into growth, then profits, and finally lasting customer appreciation.

Praxis is a Greek word meaning “habitual or established practice.” Translated to one’s business routine, it implies the way one naturally does their job. There are many ways to describe praxis; adjectives such as creative, driven, sympathetic, excellent problem solver, organized, efficient, and decisive are all examples. Unfortunately, these adjectives are relative and imprecise. Tests have been derived which measure behavior and personality, which are key elements of praxis. Myers-Briggs, and Enneagram are two very popular evaluations yielding 16 and 9 “types” respectively. Even though we know how important work style can be, we still see many situations where describing a specific job as simply marketing, sales, contractor, or even a trade such as nursing could attract someone with the right background but with a very inappropriate work style.

CycloPraxis is the mapping of worker praxis to the lifecycle stage representing the maturity of any given business unit. For the purposes of cyclopraxis the lifecycle stages are defined as authoring [startup], building [early growth], capitalizing [late growth and maturity], diversifying [really authoring/building a new business unit], and extending [decline]. Authors, builders, Capitalizers and the captains who manage them, diversifiers, and Extenders best staff these respective lifecycle stages. Each of the praxes have unique characteristics that have been well researched. Authors are responsible for undeterred championing of the initial idea. Builders are personally credited with necessary and important first accomplishments. Capitalizers seek maximum returns by carefully adhering to processes and being mindful of boundaries. Extenders keep both accumulated wisdom alive and key customers supported for as long as possible. Diversifiers and Captains play special roles as managers in the capitalizing stage. Each group has a natural way of working [praxis] that happens to align with the needs of the business as the business moves from lifecycle stage to stage. For more information, see the appendix at the end of this paper. Or better yet, download the companion article “Cyclopraxis in the Business World” available at www.cyclopraxis.com.

This paper is written for Builders [and for those who would like to understand how the Builder relates to others]. The first section talks about the nature of the work of the builder. The next section focuses in on a personality description of the Builder. This section is followed by how the Builder is perceived by and works with others. Now the stage is set to examine how the Builder will perform in the midst of business units in various stages of growth. Lastly, the Builder’s positive and negative contributions to the startup of a small business unit are discussed.

THE WORK OF THE BUILDER

To understand the nature of the work of the builder, we first need to define *actipraxes*, which are types of work activity. Most work in a midlife business unit is defined by formalized pre-existing rules that are repetitively followed. Such work is typically classified in ways specific to individual industries and human relations departments. However, work activity outside the classic rule based production type jobs is not well defined by any existing classification methods. It is doubtful that a single universal classification of work activity will be adopted anytime soon. Instead, classification systems exist to serve the needs of the person doing the classifying. To better understand cyclopraxis, we have defined 5 types of work activity not defined by formalized pre-existing rules and called them the *actipraxes*.

- inspirational - break rules for something brand new,
- discovery - learn rules,
- prescriptive - validate and encode rules,
- assistive - break rules to satisfy [most common after productive activity]
- encouraging - break rules to motivate others.

In order to have predefined rules for the execution of productive work, those rules must be encoded and validated, which is prescriptive actipraxis activity. But even before the rules can be encoded and validated, they must be determined through discovery-actipraxis activity. The building activity of a business unit is prescriptive-actipraxis and discovery-actipraxis activity or work.

PRESCRIPTIVE WORK

Where do the rules for productive work come from? They must be established or defined. The activity to prescribe those rules is *prescriptive*-actipraxis activity. For example, someone has to come up with the rule for a productive-actipraxis airline pilot to follow in the event of a landing gear failure. That someone was probably a team of aeronautical engineers, safety specialists, and simulator programmers. Due to their expertise, they no doubt know the best procedure. A prescriptive activity of *encoding* turns the knowledge of these specialists into a predefined activity rule that others can repeatedly follow. The encoded result may be recorded in the pilot's handbook or loaded into a simulator as a routine to be practiced. Other examples of encoding might include highway specifications for the road building crew, repair manuals for an automobile, and computer prompts for a fast food outlet sales person.

Prescriptive-actipraxis activity also includes a *validating* activity that occurs just before or even alongside the encoding activity. Consider the repair manual mentioned just above. For instance, in order for the person doing the encoding work to be certain of the symptom-failure-fix relationship that person may take a new correctly functioning car and systematically introduce failures and observe the symptoms. Without validating the predefined repair rules to be encoded, subsequent productive work could be wasted and inefficient. Validating can take many different forms and is most conveniently viewed from a classically functional perspective.

- Development: Constructing proof of concept as in models, prototypes, or exploratory engagements. Proof-of-concept is first of kind wherein the tasks by definition cannot be predefined.
- Marketing: Customer reaction tests for price, packaging, advertising, features, billing. These validations are often called test marketing, prescreening, trials, beta, or shakedown. These are first time ever introductions of customers to new products/services where it is impossible to pre-define the reactions.
- Manufacturing: New product/process/equipment introductions frequently require tweaks and adjustments to find a recipe satisfactory for volume. In many cases, manufacturing engineers disassemble finished prototypes and conduct careful time motion studies in order to develop optimum assembly methods. Manufacturing validating work may also include suppliers, test departments, shop floor scheduling, purchasing, and distribution.
- Operations: A new medical procedure, a new client in a call center, a new recipe in a restaurant, or a new ski lift at a resort all introduce situations that have never been dealt with before. Ultimately a set of predefined tasks will be encoded that will guide subsequent productive work. As those tasks are being encoded, they will be validated through a series of evaluations.
- Sales: A novel sales concept or a new product/service can be validated in a small way before extending globally. Customer value statements are especially useful to test, refine, and encode in this manner.

Validating is an important component of the prescriptive-actipraxis activity and goes beyond the traditional functions of a business unit. Teachers validate the approach they will use to convey a new concept when they try out the approach on a colleague, friend, or unsuspecting student. A sprinkler irrigation company would certainly validate a new sprinkler placement pattern before encoding a new set of design rules and distributing to the installation crews.

Finally, prescriptive-actipraxis activity involves some level of decision-making. The responsible *prescriber* has to *decide* upon content to validate and content to encode. In order to take a decision, the prescriber must feel empowered, be willing to accept some level of risk for the correctness of the content, and accept responsibility for the results of those who later follow the rules in productive-actipraxis fashion.

Prescriptive work makes up just a small fraction – probably less than 5% -- of the work in a large and mature corporation. However, the leverage is very high and the impact on next generation success is huge. Companies can earn strategic competitive advantage by carefully monitoring validation results and carefully staffing the positions that encode predefined tasks for future productive work. In small or new companies, prescriptive-actipraxis activity may be a part of every supervisor's day as he/she provides on the job training to workers in advance of every new situation.

The script is usually something like “Oh, this is different...Well, I see what to do ... Watch me ... Any Questions? ... so do it like I just did ... and come tell me when you are finished with this batch.” Validation occurred when the supervisor did the task – heretofore not predefined -- the first time; encoding occurred as the employee watched the supervisor; and the employee has a new predefined rule to repeatedly apply.

DISCOVERY WORK

The preceding discussion of prescriptive-actipraxis activity consciously assumed that the validation would be successful. But, success doesn't automatically happen – it is most likely the result of some prior work. We call that prior work the *Discovery-actipraxis* activity. In the supervisor example from the preceding section the supervisor had the answer in seconds so the discovery-actipraxis activity was nothing more than perhaps a quick recall from memory or a simple deductive joining of two principles. Most discoveries take much longer; examples abound from the chemical and pharmaceutical industries where discovery-actipraxis activity takes years or decades. Leifer et al [2000] chronicles a DuPont chemical biodegradable packaging innovation that has spent 11 years [and counting] in discovery-actipraxis work. Discovery periods for simple problems – how to get a colleague's computer up and running again – may take minutes, hours, or days. Discovery periods for projects – such as devising a spreadsheet billing system from the output of a call record computer program -- can be hours, days, weeks, or months. Discovery periods for new products and services typically range from one to several years. This section describes the activity of a person or team during a discovery process lasting a week or more.

Discovery work always involves complex tasks and novel problems. Not only is the task without any predefinition, but at the onset there are more unknowns than knowns. Such challenges invigorate some workers and intimidate others. Discovery work will require a worker who is comfortable with complexity and sometimes being wrong. A worker who is motivated to increase his effort in order to increase performance on predefined productive-actipraxis activity, may be frustrated when a similar increase in effort does not yield improvement on discovery activity.

The complexity of the discovery task is increased by factors such as:

- the number of variables;
- number of inputs, outputs, and sensory functions;
- the number of subtasks or number of steps;
- judgment guidelines that must be from other sources;
- inexact or unknown means-ends connections;
- path goal multiplicity [are there several ways to accomplish the same result];
- negative relationships among desired outcomes; and,
- lack of or ambiguous structures.

Detailed research on the discovery-actipraxis work style is limited. Campbell [1988] was an excellent resource with his descriptions of 4 types of discovery: *Decision Tasks*, *Judgment Tasks*, *Problem Tasks*, and *Fuzzy Tasks*.

Identification of appropriate discovery type depends on whether:

- A *Problem Task* has multiple potential ways [paths] to arrive at the desired end state. For instance, a jig saw puzzle could go together in any order. Other examples are chess problems, event scheduling, and product repair.
- A *Decision Task* has multiple desired outcomes [end states] one of which is optimum. For instance an automobile can have many different tail light designs, but one will sell best. Other examples are employee selection, choosing a house, selecting a building sight.
- A *Judgment Task* has uncertain or at best probabilistic linkages among paths and outcomes. For instance, choosing a vendor between one who has a reputation for high quality and on time delivery while the other has a reputation for low cost. Choosing either path influences the product/service of which the vendor is an element. Other examples are intelligence analysis and stock market analysis
- A *Fuzzy Task* has conflicting independencies among paths and outcomes. An example of this is the decision whether to purchase a franchise. Buying a franchise is the quickest way to get into the fast food business. However freedoms are limited, big upfront fees are required, local market needs cannot be addressed, and competition from identical franchises can be intense. On the other hand, risk of failure is higher with an independent fast food establishment and the final value at exit may be less. Engaging a franchise broker requires

an upfront fee and will result in some high-pressure sales tactics that may influence the outcome, but will yield some interesting data and perspectives. What hypothesis will be tested next? Fuzzy tasks are generally associated with business ventures.

The process of discovery work is all about running experiments, of accumulating the successful outcomes, and of embracing the failures for the value of what's learned. Discovery work is often nicknamed "trial and error" or "probe and learn." A visual metaphor of the discovery process might be to imagine having to find one's way out of the Grand Canyon from some random starting point that is not on an established trail. Multiple routes may exist with one surely easier than the rest. Following one's first instincts might seductively lead to easy terrain. At some point however, impassible canyon walls will force backtracking. Multiple trials will lead to multiple errors. All the while precious resources – eg water – will be in shorter supply. The best route may have the most unusual start – perhaps downhill rather than uphill.

Like a fractal, discovery work is recursively self-repeating. The discovery process starts with a very simple macro-level route-plan from start to finish. The first step of the route-plan is decomposed into appropriately detailed still-sequential mid-steps. And the first mid-step is further decomposed into a series of independent micro-steps that can be worked in parallel. A hypothesis is selected for each micro-step and a simulation is run to validate [as in prescriptive work] the hypothesis. [A new product development/discovery program may ultimately examine thousands of micro-steps and tens of thousands of hypotheses]. If the validation is successful, the success is logged. If the validation fails, the simulation is declared a failed experiment. Initially the validations score a high percentage of successes. As the route-plan unfolds, constraints get tighter and failures are more frequent. Failures require a new hypothesis be tested, assuming a new hypothesis remains available. If no additional hypotheses are available, then the defining micro-step and its parent mid-step are declared dead ends. The entire process must back up perhaps requiring re-planning even at the macro-step level. Retracing generally invalidates other micro-step hypotheses and mid-step successes. Conventional wisdom – backed by detailed numerical study -- holds it is best to find failures as early as possible. Studies from the automotive industry reveal that a single late-stage micro-step dead end can impact a thousand other successful decisions.

The hypotheses to be tested may take a variety of forms. If the discovery is about getting a product or service to market, one possible hypothesis would be "partner with company A"; or if "A" says no-thanks, then try to partner with "B". If the discovery is about solving a web page problem with a software routine, the hypothesis might be that a certain syntax choice is correct. If the discovery is about curing a troublesome ache or pain, the hypothesis could be that the data from a certain test will yield discriminating data. If the discovery is about raising funds for a startup, the hypothesis could be that a certain investor will find the business-plan compelling. Should the investor/business-plan hypothesis prove to be wrong, the startup might either try another investor or might modify the business plan [or do both]. Thomas Edison's discovery was about finding the right physics for the light bulb. In total he tried over 10,000 different hypotheses, backtracked dozens of times, and was fortunate to have found a design that ultimately worked with alternating current as well as the direct current path he chose.

Measures for and monitoring of discovery work is inexact. Productivity is rarely measured and those involved with discovery work are always quick to argue that uncertainties render productivity measures subjective. Financial budgets exist, but are usually amended whenever the case can be made that additional resources will improve odds of success or shorten time to completion. Completion date is arguably the most watched measure. Large discovery work efforts include regularly scheduled checkpoints to routinely monitor progress. But even when completion dates are missed, it does not mean failure for discovery work – if the presumed benefit is sufficient. In 1996, Starbucks launched a quest to find an eco-friendly coffee cup. Early trials were rejected because they crumpled easily or smelled bad. Along the way, the discovery work had tried several different suppliers and realized that FDA approval was necessary. Finally in 2006 the project delivered and a cup was launched with 10 percent recycled fiber.

Discovery work is different from productive work because there are no predefined rules to follow. However successful discovery work can lead to subsequent prescriptive work that yields predefined rules for repetitive

productive work. Obviously successful validation is the goal as the “back to the drawing board” step is very expensive in the case of a failed validation. Discovery work is also different from assistive work since there is no identified recipient of assistance. Yet, discovery work is often a component piece of an assistive encounter. Some small-scale discovery work occurs during the problem-solving step of assistive work. [Problem solving discovery work for an assistive encounter is applied to a single problem event while problem solving discovery work that is a precursor for later prescriptive and productive work will be highly leveraged across multiple events.]

In summary, predefined rules don't exist beyond the established frontiers of geography, technology, science, business models, and operating paradigms. Natural events [hurricanes, avalanches, epidemics, etc] also have a way of interrupting normalcy and creating situations without predefined rules. In these situations new rules have to be discovered and then prescribed through validation and encoding for future productive-work. The goal of discovery work is to -- as quickly as possible -- uncover the recipe. Experimentation, which by its very definition itself is not a productive work style, is the underlying foundation of discovery work.

THE BUILDER

OVERVIEW

The builder praxis is essential in the business world. The Builder plays a key role in the formation and success of businesses. The three key beneficial characteristics of the Builder are a passion for exploration/discovery work, a strong orientation to task accomplishment/completion, and the prescriptive leadership implications of their work. The orientation to *discovery* results in self-motivated problem solving, creative hypothesizing, and forward thinking even as others long for status quo. The orientation to *task* leads others to observe that builders are focused, driven, impatient, and insensitive. The orientation to *prescription* – a narrow form of leadership -- results in organization, pragmatism, progress, and competitiveness.

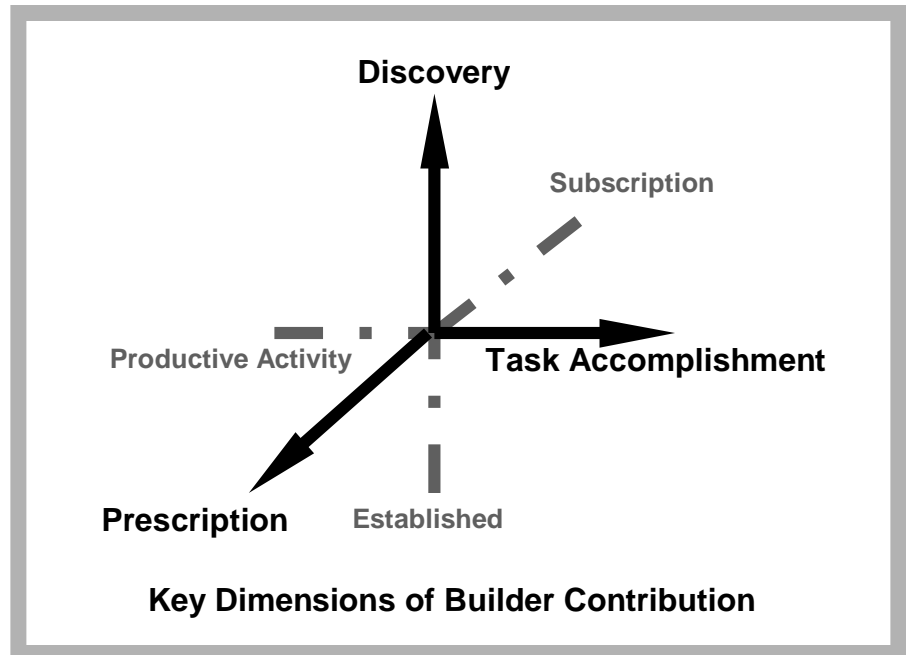
Builders are outgoing types who make things happen. They organize resources, people, ideas, discussion, and experiments into progress. They are important people to have on a team to ensure attention is focused on progress. They will usually analyze in detail any information they have and then make their decision based on what is necessary to ensure the satisfactory completion of the task. They put a heavy emphasis on getting the job done in an efficient and effective way. Builders enjoy going out in search of new opportunities and designing initiatives to respond to those opportunities. They can usually be counted on to look for new ways of doing things. Builders are practical, realistic, matter-of-fact, and have a natural head for business. Builders like to organize and initially run activities. They are decisive and move quickly to implement decisions. They like to organize new projects, operations, procedures, and people, and then act to get things done. They value competence, efficiency, and results. Builders take an objective approach to problem solving and are tough when situation requires toughness. They have little patience with confusion, inefficiency or halfway measures. Builders focus on the present and what is real and actual. They apply and adapt relevant past experience to deal with problems. They prefer jobs where the results are immediate, visible, and tangible. They can project the steps needed to accomplish a task, avoid potential problems, assign responsibilities, and marshal resources. They cover all bases, leave no loose ends, and get things done on time. If they see things are not working, they will plan and act to correct the situation.

KEY DIMENSIONS

Three traits or abilities significantly define the builder: task accomplishment, exploration and discovery, and prescriptive leadership. Builders are significantly stronger than the rest of the working population in two or more of these dimensions.

Special Task accomplishment defines the skill/ability to personally complete individual steps of a project. The opposite of task accomplishment is work activity which while productive does not have an associated completion attribute. Builders are the most results oriented class of an organization. They accept challenges – the more difficult the better. Builders prefer tasks where the results are observable. Builders solve problems facing the organization or

the organization's goods and services. They prefer the clear objectives of a visible problem and will work interdependently toward the solution, often knocking down obstacles rather than detouring around or waiting for the obstacle to go away. Builders cause action and get immediate results. They do not like things in disarray or half completed and therefore once a task is started, they will strive whenever possible to reach a solution and bring the task to a conclusion. Builders tend to work in bursts of energy and get a lot done in a short period. They can become unaware of time and create situations difficult for others to keep pace. Builders take great pride in personally accomplishing their tasks and tend to judge others on relative ability to achieve similar concrete results.



Discovery defines the skill/ability to determine the best solution to a strategically leveraged, heretofore unsolved, small or large, business problem. The opposite of discovery is to work with proven established recipes. Builders are always questioning the status quo. In many organizations, they earn a reputation for continually suggesting to others that they change the way things are done. Builders like to try out new schemes and ideas; they like jobs that are complex, challenging, and unknown. They are particularly interested in assessing to what extent a new idea can be made to work in practice. They are usually strong on identifying the worth of a new project or task. Quiet experimentation is the discovery method of choice; but they often get the ideas for experiments by socializing with others. Builders tend to be strong-willed individuals, continually seeking new horizons. As self-reliant, independent thinkers, they prefer to find the way to new solutions. When free of the constraining influence of the group, builders are able to bypass convention and find novel solutions. Builders delight in engineering their way to unique ways of approaching and solving problems. Builders enjoy assessing how a new business can be made to work; they tend to see possibilities beyond the existing work and move as quickly as possible to explore the new opportunity. Once up and running, Builders are usually more satisfied by moving to another new idea rather than staying on a day-to-day basis with the one they just discovered and implemented.

Prescription is a type of program [not people] leadership requiring the self-efficacy for bold decisions that define a recipe for others to follow. The opposite of prescription is subscription – the act of subscribing to and following established rules. Once a new idea is authored, the opportunity falls to builders to set up methods and systems to turn the idea into an operational reality for others to capitalize upon. Builders can see the big picture beyond what exists and pursue it; they enjoy working on and with new projects. If idea captures a Builder's imagination, they will go out and convince others, even though there is little hard evidence. The builder's interest in a final organized environment and their satisfaction with creation of new structures generally results in excellent rules, regulations, and metrics for those who follow. Top builders can visualize where the organization and its people should be going in the long term. They are frustrated that others are so tied up with day-to-day operation issues they cannot see longer-term objectives. Builders have a longer term 3, 5, 10-year perspective; they see the big picture on a wide scale. Builders can get people together and get them to talk about the important decisions that must be taken. Working as a group they make their best decisions through conversation with others rather than contemplating by themselves.

OTHER BUILDER QUALITIES

People Leadership. Frequently the task is sufficient in size that many people are involved all with building responsibilities of discovery, validation, and encoding. The builder praxis is adept at generating generate enthusiasm for the task and persuading people to perceive things in a different way so they feel a sense of urgency in doing something about the issues. A major strength of the builder's people leadership is their enthusiasm for ideas, and their willingness to let others know what they are thinking. They are perceived as lively and coming forward with new ideas. Builders also have a quiet self-efficacy about even the most difficult of challenges that is simultaneously easily noticed and readily comforting to those whom they lead. If there is a significant job to be done, they will try to organize people and resources and will expect others to participate.

In parallel, builder leaders very strong with task, discovery, and prescription can make others uneasy. Not everyone can rapidly digest change; there will be times when people feel that there are too many new ideas and time is needed to let the organization settle down. While builders do listen well, they do not leave that impression. Frequently others feel that builders are not taking enough time to understand their viewpoint and others may feel they are rushing too fast. Builders can also be insensitive to those who get in the way or make it difficult to pursue the builder's goals. The kindest of outcomes occurs when the Builder simply 'moves on' not bothering to waste energy on those who do not understand. A more insensitive outcome occurs when the Builder becomes belligerent with those who fail to embrace task goals, discovery methodologies, or tight timetables. Achievement-motivated people – including cyclopraxis builders --usually have difficulty as managers of large organizations. They typically set high standards, so high in fact that others rarely meet them. This makes them critical and demanding – not supportive. The need for achievement is often directed toward personal accomplishment, which makes it hard to let go or to give others credit. Not surprisingly, power-driven people are satisfied to achieve things by getting other to do them; as a result they delegate better. Builders are less power-motivated than line executives; they are achievement motivated instead. Still, the need to be influential fits well with the management career path. Builders do well to fill this need with prescriptive leadership rather than people leadership.

Self Motivation. Builders are usually leaders of the way – rarely followers. They push forward to achieve objectives despite new problems encountered at each step of their tasks. Builders take responsibility and expect others to do just the same. They take pride in meeting deadlines and being punctual. The motivation of a builder is largely internal and flows from deeply felt personal goals. Their commitment to their own goals even precludes an automatic acceptance of the group's goals. By retaining control over the direction of their lives, they develop a strong sense of accountability to their accepted tasks. The Builder rarely passes the buck. As pressure builds around a project, the Builder tends to shift more into solo accomplishment mode discounting any assistance from others. Builders set a fast pace and others constantly scramble to keep up. Builders are hard drivers of themselves; and despite an open sociable demeanor they are hard drivers of the others too. Builders like to simultaneously juggle many sub-tasks and value that same skill in others.

Builders' innate abilities and strong self-efficacy frequently lead to a conclusion that to do things right they "have to do it themselves". In many cases they are right, however such conclusions make delegation difficult, result in unhappy coworkers or subordinates, unduly burden the afflicted builder, and delay overall completion of tasks.

Focus on Business. Builders are capable of intense focus. For this reason they are the appropriate compliment to the authors who typically precede them in the lifecycle. When any particular idea or opportunity is still in infancy [perhaps only 20-30 percent of the details are worked out] the Author may already be on to their next vision. The tenacious builder focus is highly appropriate for taking the idea from very early percentage completion to perhaps 90-98 percent complete. Builders relish the opportunity to address the widest breadth of business aspects – from sales to development, finance to human relations – in discovering, validating, and encoding. Builders bring first pragmatism to the authored idea at this lifecycle stage. Ultimately, the rules they encode must work for the large capitalizing departments who will follow.

Outgoing Personality. Builders enjoy meeting with others, but they are sociable only on their own terms and for their own gains. They dislike spending a long period of time in small talk that gets in the way of completing work.

Frequently the objective of their conversation is to socialize problems, experimental methods, or hypotheses; other conversation is considered unimportant. They have good verbal skills, which they use to persuade people to be enthusiastic in achieving their goals. Builders speak well to others and are energized when given the opportunity, but they prefer to prepare in advance for such opportunities. Builders are good communicators of the successes, accomplishments, and progress of their tasks and projects so that everyone is working to the same quickly changing plan. In negotiations or when under other stress builders tend to speak their mind which at times offends the other participant. In summary, the builder's social exchanges tend to be results oriented.

Perception of Insensitivity. Builders consider it important for people to do their duty and achieve their goals just as they endeavor. They bring reason, logic, and experimental systems to bear on the task and view emotional matters including people's feelings as secondary to getting the task accomplished. Rather than sit around with others considering, theorizing, and discussing, builders prefer to weigh pros and cons, make a decision, take action, and if does not work simply try again. They are persistent when pursuing the results they desire and will do whatever is necessary to overcome obstacles to success. In addition they have high expectations of others and can be critical when their standards are not met. In the passion to get into action, builders can overlook other people's views that may need at least empathetic listening and possibly thoughtful consideration. By focusing on quick results, builders seemingly lack empathy and are judged as uncaring about the concerns of others. This reputation is not without merit. Builders tend to speak their minds rather than hold back just to please people. Builders can become impatient if team members don't comply with the plan. Builders don't let obstacles get in the way; they clear a path as quick and straight as possible, even if it means having to overcome resistance from others. Moreover, while they most often use direct, forceful behavior, builders can also shrewdly manipulate people and situations. If all else fails, builders become belligerent with others. Builders are frequently described as: direct, insensitive, driven, pushy, impatient, ...

UNDER STRESS

At times everyone is forced to work in stressful conditions. For Builders, stress can arise from a number of circumstances most of which can be related to time pressures. Examples of time pressures include: 1) a competitor who might complete first, 2) a rash of unsuccessful discovery experiments causing the task to fall behind despite enormous effort, 3) the traditional organization appearing to stall acceptance and adoption, 4) constant fears that overall support [political sponsorship, money, resources] will evaporate before the task is completed, and 5) a particular person not contributing harmoniously and taking too much time to coach and/or persuade into alignment. Note the absence of factors related to task failure or personal failure from the list of stress causing situations.

Builders demonstrate a keen interest in their work and an intense, continual pursuit of accomplishment. They have a high opinion of their work and under pressure may hesitate to delegate tasks. Instead, they take on the work themselves to ensure that things are done right. When they do delegate, they have a tendency to take back the task if it does not go according to their expectations. This happens frequently when builders of a higher ability level are delegating to builders of a lower ability level. This reverse delegation can demoralize associates thereby reinforcing the perception of a gap in contribution and turning the gap into a reality. The reverse delegation reaction has a high likelihood of slowing the overall task/project since the pressured Builder becomes critical path to progress. Business units are advised to assure that only builders of top ability are assigned to key tasks.

Under pressure, Builders also have a tendency to become frustrated and impatient with those who move more slowly toward the task or project's goals. Two common occurrences are worthy of discussion. The first occurs when capitalizer and extender praxis persons become team members [loaned or permanent] of the project and are assigned their own tasks. The capitalizer and extender praxes lack experience and may even be unable to perform the Builder functions of discovery-actipraxis and prescriptive-actipraxis work [especially the decision making element of prescriptive-actipraxis]. As a result, Capitalizers and Extenders are slow to make even small contributions on their tasks and to the overall project. The second is with capitalizer and extender praxis persons properly carrying out their capitalizer and extender duties. This situation is quite common when the builder's task is well served by deviating, borrowing, or leveraging something from a mainstream organization. The builder's interest in 'new' or 'change' does not align with the capitalizer's charter to produce efficiently or the Extender's charter to maintain. Any cooperation is

reluctant, and contribution is rarely timely. The builder's frustration and impatience often manifests in expressive ways ranging from: looks of dissatisfaction, complaints to authority, overt assignment of blame, and angry shouting.

THE BUILDER PRAXIS IN OTHER PERSONALITY TESTING

Meyers Briggs is a popular work preferences assessment tool. Candidates are measured on 4 continuums

- Extroversion to Introversion E/I
- Sensing to Intuition S/N
- Thinking to Feeling T/F
- Judging to Perceiving J/P

The 16 resulting combinations are not at all equally distributed.

Meyers Briggs experts believe the builder's style arises from the TJ[Thinking and Judging] combination. The E/I [extroversion or introversion ways of assimilating information] and S/N [preference to sensing or intuition inputs] are of less consequence but there is slight preference to E and N. So the Meyers Briggs ENTJ is the best match to the cyclopraxis Builder. Builders are also found in INTJ and ESTJ types. Meyers Briggs typing makes no distinction between a medial score and a polarized score. In reality two persons that are a medial I versus a medial E – perhaps scoring at the 55th percentile and 45th percentiles respectively – would be far more alike than a medial I scoring at the 55th percentile and a polarized I scoring at the 95th percentile even though both are I types. The same argument can be applied to the other scales S/N, T/F, and J/P. Polarized tendencies are very important to cyclopraxis. Builders with high ability tend to have TJ scores that are strongly polarized. While the TJ combination would theoretically account for 25 percent of a population [actual statistics are 27.8 percent in the US]. The strongly polarized TJ combination would identify a smaller percentage – say 10% -- of the population who are the highest ability builders.

The Enneagram is another popular personality testing model available for free from a variety of places [see www.enneagraminstitute.com]. Subjects are scored on each of 9 dimensions yielding a multiplicity of combinations that are difficult to map to functions and professions. Hence, corporate usage is low. The primary descriptions [Achiever, Helper, Loyalist, ...] yield a thought provoking series of options to staffing a building business. Builders are sure to score well on the Achiever and Challenger dimensions. Builders will likely score lowest on the Helper, Loyalist, and Peacemaker dimensions.

DiSC is another popular personality assessment vehicle that correlates to characteristics important in the workplace. The subject takes a 28 question test and receives a score on 4 dimensions: D – Dominance; I-Influence; S-Steadiness; and C-Conscientiousness. The profile for a builder is very high on Dominance and very low on Steadiness and Conscientiousness. Influence is found to range from moderately low for a builder participant to moderately high for a builder leader. The low score on steadiness is important as it signals low regard for status quo rules and overall willingness to change to the new opportunities afforded by the task or project.

The Gallup organization has popularized the 34 strengths of Donald Clifton. Those strengths most closely related to building-cyclopraxis and discovery and prescriptive actipraxes include: Achiever, Activator, Arranger, Competition, Focus, Restorative, and Strategic.

- Achievers have a great deal of stamina and work hard. They take great satisfaction from being busy and productive.
- Activators are impatient for action. Only action can make things happen. Only action leads to performance. Once a decision is made the activator must follow through.
- Arrangers can organize, but they also have a flexibility that complements this ability. They like to figure out how all of the pieces and resources can be arranged for maximum productivity.
- Competition. People strong in the Competition theme measure their progress against the performance of others. They strive to win first place and revel in contests.

- Focus. People strong in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through, and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act.
 - People strong in the Restorative theme are adept at dealing with problems. They are good at figuring out what is wrong and resolving it.
 - Strategic. People strong in the Strategic theme create alternative ways to proceed. Faced with any given scenario, they can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues.

A strong correlation exists with the work of Freud and extended by Erich Fromm. Freud sorts personalities into just 3 types: narcissist, obsessive, and erotic. Fromm added a 4th type called the marketing personality. Maccoby [2003] does an excellent job aligning these personality types to experiences in the workplace. There is a strong observed relationship between Builders and the Marketing Freud/Fromm personality type. Marketeers' most fundamental characteristics are strong proactive adaptability to the situation and outgoing social interests. They apply their sociability into superior networking skills that threaten to foster a 21st century replacement for the caring erotic personalities that have been the social fabric of corporations for the past century. Marketeers' self esteem and self-assigned valuation comes from a personal stock market that goes up and down with a variety of currencies such as: accomplishments, their alignment with key people, their assignment to visible critical projects, early mastery of new skills, latest trends, etc. Missing from the list of currencies is having experiments come out wrong, being fastest or most productive, or being most helpful or personable. Their biggest challenge is that they lack a center position on which they will take a stand no matter what; consequently they are always asking "am I doing OK", "is this working", and "did I give the right answer?" Marketeers almost never use 'right' or 'wrong' [or black or white], rather they use 'appropriate' [or grey]. Marketeers do well in many different roles: sales professions, public relations, advertising, venture capital, technical design, and as senior management of companies or divisions that are expanding into new markets. Marketers make excellent builders because they are driven by their own stock valuation to achieve and accomplish their assigned tasks. Marketers also flock to situations involving change because their own adaptability assures their excellence. Obsessives used to be the most common Freud/Fromm personality type and were the backbone of the American Industrial powerhouse from the 1850's to the 1950's. Then in the 1950's, the marketing personality started to gain numbers. Today, the marketing personality outnumbers all others and most everyone shares some aspects of this type in order to survive in contemporary volatile workplaces. The post-industrial society of the knowledge age is less a contest of people against nature and more a competition of people against other people – a competition in which self-promoters, nimble workers, and networkers excel.

SUMMARY

Builders, like authors, are strong initiators – success makers as opposed to success followers. They play an absolutely fundamental role in the growth of new business units. In product development, they are responsible for commercializing – in both product/service and process -- the author's idea. Builders institute the quality control, the manufacturing, the delivery, the support, the financial controls, the value proposition, the sales recipe, and the first marketing collaterals. Excellent skills development books have been written for marketing builders [Moore, Crossing the Chasm 1991], for development builders [Reinhart, Managing The Design Factory, 1997], and for sales builders [Holden, Power Base Selling, 1990]. Yet the builder-praxis is largely unstudied as is their essential role in adolescent business units. Builders are highly organized, energetic, excellent problem solvers, very pragmatic, prolific communicators, and able to simultaneously work on a phenomenal number of tasks. Builders fearlessly run lots of experiments looking for the right recipe and learn rapidly from their mistakes. They work long hours and hold accomplishing the goal above all else [even above employee relations]. The builder-praxis is driven by achievement of goal, and once achieved they need something else to build or they become unhappy.

Unlike the author, a builder needs to be better grounded either with someone else's idea or affiliated with an organization. Builders are strong drivers and push organizations hard, and so once again the same personality traits that make a builder-praxis successful in the expansion stage also limits its effectiveness later in the business evolution. Builders are seen by others as impatient, insensitive to people, and overly type "A". They are poor leaders of the large number of effective capitalizers because the Builder drives the Capitalizer with endless urgent improvements rather

than focusing on people management, team motivation, and predictability. Builders' narrow pragmatism – a strength during the building stage – not only inhibits their effectiveness at authoring new ideas but also limits their sensitivity to the motivation needs of the large sales, marketing, and manufacturing populations to follow.

Many Authors and Builders make a career out of entrepreneurship, always starting and launching businesses, never sticking around after a few years, not part of a corporation or larger firm. Other authors seek the safety of corporate research settings where they are free to explore ideas. [Not all researchers are authors; many are capitalizers, or extenders]. Freelance builders can be found in project management careers. Builders and Authors are rarely found running franchises or main-street businesses. Nor are they likely to feel satisfied in traditional roles in the medical or legal professions, in education, or in the delivery of services.

THE BUILDERS' WORKPLACE

THE IDEAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE BUILDER

The Builder thrives on tasks with a specific end or goal that includes personal accomplishment, with time and cost constraints, with challenges that demand decisive leadership, with sufficient unknowns that discovery is interesting, and with high strategic leverage requiring prescriptive leadership. Builders are very much task centered and hands on. Builders are energized by

- power and authority
- prestige and challenge
- opportunities for individual accomplishments
- wide scope of operations
- many new and varied activities
- freedom from controls and supervision
- opportunities for advancement
- direct answers from management

These are important elements to structure into the builder's work assignments. Builders function at peak efficiency and they expect recognition equal to their contribution – high compensation, leadership positions, visibility, and continued challenges. Of this list, a continued challenge is most frequently overlooked. Builder retention is contingent on providing a stream of challenges with increasing visibility, strategic prescriptive leadership, and compensation potential.

Despite the considerable strengths of Builders, they need checks and balances to arrive at the best solutions for the overall organization. When builders associate alongside those with complimentary strengths the outcomes improve. Some complimentary strengths to consider include: ability to calculate risks and use caution, ability to fully research facts, ability to recognize needs of others, and ability to appreciate needs of the capitalizing organization. Perhaps the most important complimentary input is some temperament to the time urgency of the overall program. These complimentary strengths are found in selected capitalizers who appreciate the contribution that Builders can offer.

Despite tough appearances, builders have fragile social needs. They prioritize little time for social conversation. They dislike most social environments unless the specifics of such an environment reinforce the accomplishment of tasks. Social environments are stimulating when they include highly intelligent or creative people.

BUILDER DOING NON-BUILDING WORK

The Builder dislikes jobs that are neat and tidy, structured by pre-defined rules, and follow a routine. They become bored when the building project is over and the work transitions from discovery and predictive to productive actipraxis. They prefer the intellectual challenge of chasing another opportunity – even as an individual contributor if necessary – to managing regular standardized operations. Therefore, the Builder is not an effective long-term contributor in a capitalizing environment typified by productive-actipraxis activity. Over the long term the Builder in a capitalizing environment will under-perform those with capitalizer praxis. Management will view the Builder in a capitalizing position as *able yet unwilling* to work by the rules. Builders' unique contribution is viewed as disruptive.

The Builder seeks jobs with prescriptive leadership potential. Assistive-actipraxis work common in the capitalizing and extending lifecycle phases lacks prescriptive challenge [problem solving, task accomplishment, and a low level of

discovery remain]. Furthermore, the builder's insensitivity with people will occasionally manifest and naturally tarnish perceptions of customer service. Therefore the Builder is not an effective long-term contributor in an extending environment. Over the long term the Builder in an extending environment will under-perform those with extender praxis. Management will view the Builder in an extending position as *able yet unwilling*.

The strengths of a builder are not optimally utilized in the performance of encouragement-actipraxis work either. A capitalizing organization cannot be effectively managed with builder impatience, insensitivity, and high individualistic accomplishment demands. The encouragement-actipraxis work of a captain prioritizes employee needs over accomplishment and results. Should a builder successfully remain in a position of line management during the capitalizing stage, they are in reality functioning as a captain.

Builders' special skills of business pragmatism and tenacious focus arise from their personality characteristics and cognitive processes. These same personality and cognitive mechanisms render the Builder less effective in the inspirational-actipraxis work of an author. Builders are no match for authors on the dimension of creative ideas. And builders seldom champion for something as long as hard as authors [its simply too easy to find something different to build]. So builders don't perform very well in author roles. Management will view the Builder in an authoring role as *potentially willing, but seemingly unable*.

VANTAGE POINTS

One's vantage point can have a powerful influence on one's perception. As might be expected, builders see other builders as normal well-adjusted workers. And from the builder's vantage point the other later stage praxes are stuck in yesterday's world, slow to embrace progress, live a predictable existence, lack ambition, overly sensitive, and boring. These are all valid observations considering the vantage point. Other workers who are so tied up in the day-to-day operational issues that they cannot see the longer-term opportunity quickly frustrate the builder.

Similarly, the other praxes – from their vantage points -- see aberrant behavior by the builder. The mainstream praxes' list of uncomplimentary adjectives to describe a builder would include: intolerant, impatient, driven, ruthless, brash, overpowering, and direct. Others see builders as moving from project to project, doing the 'glory work', and then departing before things really even get going. More positively, others see them as conscientious, dependable, decisive, stimulating, and self-confident.

These vantage point observations are developed in greater depth in later sections.

BUILDERS IN LARGE BUSINESSES

The large company is advised to retain sufficient numbers of builders in order to commercialize new opportunities and in order to provide necessary change to keep pace with the times. A starting recommendation is for 10 percent of the workforce to possess a productive builder praxis. Adjustment up or down is appropriate if done in conscious adoption to market forces.

Diversification is another word to describe the process of commercializing new opportunities, and reengineering is another word to describe necessary modernizing change. The builder-diversifier or builder-reengineer will be many times more effective than capitalizers or extenders in assuring continued competitiveness. Big companies have the luxury of identifying, retaining, and consciously assigning a pool of authors and a pool of builders [of course they have legions of capitalizers and extenders too]. The most effective staffing algorithm launches projects with authors. Then the project is quickly re-staffed with builders while the authors are one by one cut free to invest their creative and promoting abilities in other areas. As the builders complete their discovery, decide upon the answers, validate the choices, and encode the rules they too get transferred to other tasks. Capitalizers are hired to execute. Managing programs this way assures the work at each stage will be accomplished by those most capable. See the companion paper "Applying Worker CycloPraxis to the Paradox of Why Large Firms Fail to Innovate" [Johnson, 2005] available at www.cyclopraxis.com for more understanding of this topic.

Many large organizations make the mistake of managing Builders by the same standards as Capitalizers and Extenders are managed. Some common errors include:

- Upon successful completion of a project, the Builder is promoted to run the program. Builders are not the best managers and have notoriously high expectations. Employees become unhappy and leave the firm and the builder's personnel file records a bad experience that is only corrected by their departure.
- Rewarding builders on the same pay structure as capitalizers and extenders. The builder's contributions are different and using the same metrics as used for capitalizers and extenders will only serve to give the Builder personal goals that conflict with corporate goals. For instance, some organizations determine pay grade by size of staff. Builders have very small staff [if any] and by inference should be on the lowest of pay grades. It is better to reward builders with bonuses and [if retention is desired] with stock options
- Not having a next set task options readily available for the builders as they finish their existing project. Builders are mobile and adaptable and will readily accept the next assignment in a different organization, different geography, and different circumstances.
- Not identifying the special Builder talent pool through some branding and recognition methods.

Builders – just like their author cousins -- are not especially compatible with mainstream capitalizer and extenders who are the primary employees of the large corporation. Builders may not integrate well at the coffee pot, at the lunch table, or at company functions. Their motivation, needs, and reward agenda's are different. Big companies are advised to not force homogeneity.

BUILDERS IN SMALL BUSINESSES

Many builders leave large companies because they are managed to the rules of capitalizers and extenders. Other builders – hearing that large companies are bureaucratic and slow moving -- never give large companies a try. Therefore, builders abound in small growing companies and frequently provide important energy and pragmatism. These builders share the title of entrepreneur along with the authors who precede them. Author-Entrepreneurs are usually successful getting things going, but are frequently challenged to grow successful companies. Builder-Entrepreneurs are an important and natural second act. The builder entrepreneurs bring focus, successful tested detail, and validation to the business. Watch for the companion paper “Applying CycloPraxis to the Challenges Faced by the Startup Business” soon to be published at www.cyclopraxis.com.

Authors regularly discover new ideas which they get excited about and begin to champion well before their existing idea has progressed far enough with its team of builders. Often the builders are asked – with an author's owner-founder authority -- to put aside the original idea in favor of the new idea. If the Builder succumbs to this practice – even once -- then the Author can be counted on to repeat the pattern multiple times. No ideas will ever make it to commercialization. And the builders will quickly frustrate since their values of focus and accomplishment are denied. Builders in small companies are advised to stay focused on the author's original idea through to completion.

The growing startup is best lead by builder-praxis individual serving as CEO. The logical role for the Author is to continue on as CTO [Chief Technical Officer] or equivalent. Note, however that founder-authors generally experience great difficulty in relinquishing control of their businesses. The typical author-CEO values control as both an end in itself and a means to other ends. Builders who are considering joining a small growing company are advised to seek firms where the author-founder has made a fully functioning commitment to a professional management team with builders in top positions.

Just as the Author is not the optimum choice for leadership as a small growing company reaches its next lifecycle stage, so also the Builder is no longer the optimum choice once validating and encoding work is completed. Once the productive-actipraxis work of the capitalizing lifecycle stage has begun capitalizers better serve the company. Four examples serve to illustrate some of the reasons

1. Builders don't value the act of harvesting the success they create. Their preference is for the next task or the next project. For instance, Hewlett Packard invented the hand held calculator and brought it to market. They

did not however capitalize on the idea and left the mainstream market to others. Or recall how in the 1990's Pepsi gained market share with every one of Coca-Cola's formula experiments.

2. Builders don't recruit the right kind of people to perform productive-actipraxis jobs. Builders like to work with other builders and naturally seek out these individuals when interviewing for co-workers. However, builders avoid both the repetition and the adherence to structured rules aspects of productive work and in the end deliver much less productivity than capitalizers. Builders are not good recruiters of capitalizers for two reasons: 1) because the Builder values different abilities than the Capitalizer brings to the interview and 2) because the Capitalizer is at least wary and perhaps even put off by the brash style of the builder co-worker or manager.
3. Builders don't manage workers doing productive work very effectively. Builders prioritize change and the accompanying change inducing tasks higher than productive delivery work. Output of goods and services becomes second priority. The small company can quickly fall behind competitors. In a nutshell, builder-managers tend to make assignments to work on the wrong activity. The ineffectiveness is amplified by a mismatch between the Capitalizer workforce and the builder-manager defined tasks. The capitalizer-worker is best at productive-actipraxis work and less skilled at discovery and prescriptive work assigned by builder-managers. Builder-managers are critical and demanding supervisors leading to low capitalizer-worker morale and high capitalizer-worker turnover.
4. Builders are more motivated by growth and change than by existing and profitability. Even when the time is opportune to harvest accomplishments and collect profits, most builders would prefer to seek out new challenges than grow riches. It is this logic that kept Jeff Bezos and his team at Amazon.com in unprofitable growth mode for so many years even when profits were possible from the basic Internet book business. Builder CEO's of small companies reluctant to get products out of the development, or constantly tweaking and documenting an intended process, or seeking to get all loose ends identified and scripted are likely delaying early revenues and profits.

In each of these situations capitalizer-managers will outperform builder-managers. Either the builders must successfully adapt or the builders must move on to different roles leaving vacancies for capitalizers to fill. Frequently, the builders in place attempt to adapt because they have retention stock options not yet vested and because small companies usually find it difficult to identify sufficient new roles for whole teams of builders. Adapting is quite difficult because praxis so much a part of fundamental nature. Small companies would be better served by defining event driven vesting to retention stock options thereby granting builders earlier freedom.

BUILDER POPULARITY

The values of American society apparently favor the builder. When shown quick praxis descriptions, many -- Authors, Builders, Capitalizers, and Extenders alike -- respond with interest in the builder praxis. Those with careers in capitalizing and extending are especially quick to express interest toward building and away from the very spot they have chosen for their life's work. Some of the reasons for this seemingly paradoxical behavior include:

- Productive actipraxis work has declined in popularity in American culture. The age of agriculture and industrialism have given way to an age of knowledge work. Americans are equating [not completely correctly] knowledge work with any actipraxis other than productive work..
- When the popular press discusses the loss of manufacturing from American shores, the recommended tonic for maintaining American economic superiority is always new entrepreneurship -- simply the work of authors and builders.
- Contemporary lore speaks most romantically of building. The air travel industry was built by Hughes Aircraft and Pan Am, Gates and Grove built the personal computing industry, and Henry Ford brought the automobile into everyone's life. Our history remembers authors and builders. For instance, who runs Intel today?
- Many organizations place those doing productive work at the lowest of wage scales. Authors, builders, often enjoy the greatest individual contributor wage opportunities. The authoring job seems improbable to those

who have few new ideas and on the surface the building job is simply about accomplishing something with fewer constraints. Most everyone likes the idea of accomplishing something.

- The 'grass is greener' syndrome no doubt creates interest in working outside one's current praxis of contribution. Again, building doesn't appear too difficult – on the surface it is simply about accomplishing something with fewer constraints. Most everyone likes the idea of working with fewer constraints.

Michael Macoby [2003] reports that the marketing personality style -- chiefly characterized by adaptability – has been on the rise since 1950. These are the same forces at work.

As a result of the popularity of the builder praxis, job openings for new programs in the building stage often draw a disproportionately large number of applications. Three populations can often be observed. The desired population is true builders with résumés of past successes and appropriate abilities and work habits. The second population is made up of those who are principally interested in getting away from their current position due to negative messages from current supervision. They are likely under-performing employees in their current role and may well be interested in the new program for inappropriate reasons. A third population perceives that the life of a builder – free from confining rules – should in an equal opportunity way be available to everyone. The third population will most likely under-perform against the needs of the program.

One cannot simply wish to be a builder and do so efficiently. One needs the requisite skills, abilities, and temperament. Discovery-actipraxis work and prescriptive actipraxis work require the energy to personally initiate and complete much of the work, the temperament to optimistically run experiment after experiment seeking the fully functioning solution, the intellect to synthesize from mountains of observations, the focus to stay the course until the path is found, and the initiative and brashness to finally make a decision and declare the recipe complete. The Discovery and Prescription components of building will be quite inefficient for those who are more comfortable working in other ways such as passing to others instead of acting themselves, seeking group consensus decisions instead of making individual declarations, rigorously planning out structure before adding content, or procrastination around running experiments.

Without requisite discovery and prescription skills, one is certain to be more efficient and effective at some different praxis. Job opportunities become available first to those most effective. Competitiveness correlates with efficiency. An individual's happiness may well follow. These points are illustrated in the following example.

The classic high school tale of dreams and accomplishment unfolds amidst the football team and cheerleading squad. Guys aspire to the prestige of football stardom whilst gals seek cheerleading notoriety. Both achievements are sure-fire tickets to social acceptance of the highest order [social acceptance being the most important 'currency' of the high school population]. Guys and Gals alike can at least at a rudimentary level play football and/or cheerlead. Despite their dreams and basic ability, not every male has the physical size and athletic skill to make the football team nor does every female have the physical and mental makeup of a cheerleader. Those who do not have the skills and abilities might be pragmatic about things and seek to make contribution to the school while simultaneously earning personal notoriety in some other way – often the marching band.

The illustration continues with just the football team

The position of highest social acceptance is the quarterback. But only one quarterback is needed and the talented player who is likely to come in second in the contest for quarterback has a difficult choice to make: do they become the second string quarterback and spend most of the season on the bench, or do they choose a running back position and have the chance for touchdown scoring notoriety.

The illustration is relevant in a number of ways. Many workers dream of being builders just as many highschoolers dream of being football players or cheerleaders. All workers can build to some degree. Yet, there are only limited numbers of positions for builders and only the most talented are selected. Simple estimates place the number of builder positions in American industry at roughly 1 in 10 workers. Similar estimates suggest a productive builder will outperform an author, capitalizer, or extender miscast into a building role by an efficiency of 10 to 1 or more. It becomes very important for the firm to staff discovery and prescriptive work with true productive builders.

In the preceding paragraph, the modification of builder with the adjective 'productive' warrants further discussion. The author, capitalizer, or extender miscast into a builder role creates the unproductive builder already discussed. Another manifestation of the unproductive builder occurs when the builder's strengths are applied in excess. An earlier paragraph identifies polarized Meyers Briggs TJ scores as being a good indicator of excellent building abilities. The same logic implies that extremely polarized TJ scores would result in extreme building behavior. The addiction to timely completion would be fanatic, the drive of others -- dysfunctional, the need for personal accomplishment -- pathological, interpersonal relations -- bipolar. While extreme behavior can succeed in a solo situation, it would be detrimental to a team project.

THE BUILDER AND OTHERS

Builders are most at home with other Builders. However there are many more capitalizers and extenders than builders in the workplace. So Builders would do well to develop sound relationships with the other praxes. These are the people who deal with the practical, tangible, and who push to get jobs done on time and in neat order. At times these relationships are quite necessary. It is frequently a Capitalizer who will harvest the Builder's accomplishments to economic returns. Builders who 'connect' with the other praxes on the other praxes' [not the builder's] terms will always realize the greatest successes.

BUILDER SEES OTHER PRAXIS

Builders judge others by the very same criteria that make them excel at what they do. As a result, the other praxes do not fare well in a builder's evaluation. The other praxes do not have the same accomplishment drive, the same experimental willingness, the same decisiveness, nor the same self-initiation as the builder. Capitalizers and extenders accept the status quo and are slow to change. No praxis earns personal accomplishments with the frequency of the Builder. It is hard to match the discovery mentality of a Builder. Furthermore, the other praxes value traits in which the Builder sees little value: Capitalizers value structure and efficiency, Authors value creativity, Extenders value affiliation.

To the builder, the other praxes are simply limiting in the way they approach work situations. Yet builders comprise only ten or so percent of the working population. Therefore the other praxes tend to discount the builder's critical judgment of the mainstream praxes. The other praxes intuitively know they are in the majority and that the Builder part of a smaller minority. As a result the Builder who is critically judgmental about members of mainstream praxes has their opinions simply ignored.

OTHER PRAXIS SEE THE BUILDER

Everyone looks at the world from his or her own individual perspective -- through one's unique lens -- a concept appropriately called vantage point. Most judge what they see based upon their own vantage point and draw conclusions based upon their individual norms. This concept is simply illustrated using physical characteristics of different cultures. Westerners traveling in the Orient often remark that people from those cultures are short. Orientals meantime feel that they are average and that Westerners are tall and chubby. As long as Orientals and Westerners are in their home cultures, neither group feels discomfort nor inconvenience at these relative differences. However, when either population is not amongst their native population such simple differences can cause discomfort and inconvenience. A Westerner living in an oriental country might have to seek specialty stores for clothing and might find the close seating in some restaurants uncomfortable. An Oriental living in a western country might similarly find clothing difficult to find in small sizes. Or an Oriental wishing to play team sports in a western nation might find their small size places them at a disadvantage against western athletes. It cannot be too difficult to extend this logic from physical size to praxis traits such as task accomplishment, self-initiation, pre-defined rules, decisiveness, and time urgency.

Up till now, this paper has described the Builder and suggested how the world looks when viewed through the Builder's lens that is calibrated to the Builder's norm. Now, it is time to turn the discussion and see how the Builder

looks to other praxes when viewed through these other lenses. Builders may have difficulty accepting how they are viewed against other norms. It is important for Builders and non-builders alike to realize that the Builder population is a minority compared to the ranks of Capitalizers and Extenders. So just as the foreigner might have to do things differently and work harder to adapt when outside their native culture, Builders might have to do things differently and adapt in order to accomplish certain goals when working with Capitalizers and Extenders. Such adaptation is difficult. Builders naturally lead with their strengths, anguish over time urgency, and view situations in a self-serving way. After all when viewed through the builder's lens, such behavior seems perfectly natural. But failure to adapt may lead to brush-off's by Capitalizers and Extenders or even Authors at which point the Builder loses important political support.

BUILDERS AMONGST AUTHORS

The Author intellectually appreciates many of the qualities of the builder praxis. Frequently, the Author is aware that they are not ideally suited to commercialize their idea. And the builder's energy to do deliver results against that very same goal creates a fine symbiosis [the other half of the relationship is the builder's need for an idea successfully championed by an author]. The similarities end here and the underlying differences in the two praxes fuel debates on how to launch a business. The builders quickly tire of the author's continued crusading and shallow contribution to necessary detail resolving experimentation. When the builder's impatience begins to show, the authors' feel unjustly criticized. An even bigger series of debates soon arise over difference in focus. As soon as an Author detects their initial idea is gaining some traction [from the group of builders], the author's creativity kicks back in and they start hatching new ideas. The Author looks to the closest Builder [typically the same ones working on the original idea] and starts crusading the new ideas. The builders are still hard at work accomplishing the rollout of the initial idea. In a large corporation, the management team may recognize the builder's contribution and sideline the author. In a small startup however, the Author is often the founder and the sponsor of the builder's employment.

Assuming the author's idea is sufficiently attractive to gather continued funding, the number of builders will quickly outnumber the number of authors, first 1:1, then 3:1, and before long 10:1. Somewhere along this journey, the builders will simply start to ignore the authors – even author founders. Some authors will depart in order to find environments where creativity and crusading can begin anew; others will be forced out.

BUILDERS IN A WORLD OF CAPITALIZERS

The Capitalizer and the Builder share little in common, yet have to work closely together. In the capitalizing lifecycle stage, Capitalizers outnumber Builders by at least ten to one so the Builder is the foreigner and must adapt. Capitalizers nickname Builders “change people” which the Builder incorrectly interprets as complimentary; while at the same time, Capitalizers hold Builders in low regard, as they are uninterested in producing against standardized metrics. Capitalizer's see Builder's as pushy, brash, insensitive, always in a hurry, not seeing things through, never making money, and overly optimistic. Capitalizers value structure and predictability; the Builder thinks more about changing such organization. Capitalizers focus on doing the most here and now; builders look to tomorrow. All these observations are Capitalizers looking at Builders through the Capitalizer's lens. However, since Capitalizer's are so numerous, such observations tend to be the majority view. Given the opportunity, many an influential capitalizer will work behind the scenes to get the builder's project terminated.

Builders and capitalizers interact in the startup company as the transition occurs between building and capitalizing lifecycle stage. The transition is discussed in the section above titled “Builders in the Small Business” and in the companion paper titled “CycloPraxis in the Business World” [Johnson, 2006]. Also watch for the companion paper “Applying CycloPraxis to the Challenges Faced by the Startup Business” soon to be published at www.cyclopraxis.com.

Builders and capitalizers interact in the diversification stage of large companies. Diversification occurs when a business unit in the capitalizing stage needs to renew its business. In order for diversification to work effectively, a senior captain amongst the capitalizing must *allow* and *sponsor* the activity. Successful diversifier-captains seek out

and encourage builders to staff the development of the diversifying activity. The diversifier-Captain is generally willing to accommodate the builder's unique style in order to succeed with diversification in the midst of capitalizers reluctant to change. But usually the diversification requires interaction with and cooperation from the established organization in many places. To make these connections effective, the Builder is advised to adapt to the Capitalizer praxis in 4 critical areas.

- *Money metrics.* The capitalizer praxis is motivated by maximizing the effectiveness of the operation as measured by increasing sales and profits -- money metrics. The Builder is advised to routinely include the return on investment [ROI] and sales upside when communicating with the capitalizers. The Builder is also advised to offer sales upside and ROI oriented receipts [for the capitalizer's management hierarchy] whenever a capitalizer contributes to their effort.
- *Power.* Capitalizer-Captains are very sensitive to power. A builder can maintain good support from a capitalizer-captain if the Builder understands, contributes, and enhances things that improve the esteem of the Captain. Frequently this can be accomplished by having the sponsorship of the diversification project come from a senior executive in whose eyes the capitalizer-captain desires a favorable impression. At other times the same senior executive might be an important ally to turn objectors into supporters.
- *Structure.* Capitalizer-Captains design, implement, and then become curators of the capitalizer's structure. Builders' very tasks are going to alter the existing structure and will therefore be negatively received. The Builder is advised to ask the senior sponsoring executive to request a recommendation of altered structure from potentially threatened capitalizer-captains. This forces the capitalizer-captain to make become positively engaged.
- *Follow through.* Capitalizers expect jobs to be 99%-plus correctly completed before anyone moves on. Capitalizers will not speak highly of any praxis not meeting their +99% standard. Builders meanwhile feel their job is complete when they reach the 95% [plus minus] state of completion. The Builder is advised to partner with capitalizers when 90% completion is achieved and work as a team of equals up through 95% completion. At the 95% point, the Builder can begin to phase out and turn more responsibility to the capitalizer who will have responsibility for the long term.

Govindarajan and Trimble [2006] report in their Harvard Business Article "Building Breakthrough Businesses Within Established Organizations" advise carefully planned forgetting from the establishment, borrowing from the establishment, and learning anew as an effective strategy for diversification. During 'forgetting' and 'borrowing' builders and capitalizers have these close interactions.

The preceding recommendations all suggest that the Builder meet the Capitalizer on the Capitalizer's terms. Another series of recommendations help Capitalizers become involved in the builder's set of activities. Early involvement builds support and pays dividends for later assimilation.

- *Time Urgency.* The builder's project may have tight deadlines. But capitalizers are not likely to share the same sense of urgency. The Builder is advised to involve the appropriate capitalizer far earlier than might be normally necessary. The Capitalizer will spend the first half of involvement learning and becoming comfortable with the eventual change. And at the point in time the Capitalizer must start making contributions they will more likely be ready to do so.
- *Small task delegation style.* Capitalizers are not experienced with discovery-actipraxis work or with the decision part of prescriptive-actipraxis work. -- key elements of the building lifecycle stage. Capitalizers are accustomed to working in highly structured situations. If major elements of the builder's project are delegated to the Capitalizer, they will be unsure where and how to start. Not enough structure is in place for the Capitalizer to be efficient. It will be best to delegate very small subtasks using a directive delegation style appropriate for a relatively inexperienced new-ish employee.
- *Advisory Positions.* Elsewhere in this paper, there are recommendations for builders against taking on too many tasks to be personally accomplished. Better to delegate -- to other builders that is. If the recipient of the delegation is a capitalizer, it might just be better for the Builders to undertake the tasks themselves. Provided however, that the Builders can get the Capitalizers to serve as their advisor. When the Capitalizers are the advisors they 1) feel powerful -- someone else is doing their job for them, 2) will get credit from the

organization and 3) have assurances that the job is being done to the standards to which they are routinely held.

- *Advisory Boards.* Gather as many capitalizer-captains as are impacted onto an advisory board and have regular highly structured meetings of the advisory board. Use the board less for advice and more for proactive communication about the progress and merits of the project. The capitalizer-captains will feel powerful with their knowledge, will come to appreciate the monetary metrics of the change, and will gain some comfort from the appearances of structure. Most important, they will feel involved.

In closing this section, builders should realize that working with the established organization will be the most difficult aspect of a diversification project.

BUILDERS IN A WORLD OF EXTENDERS

In this section we only consider Expert-Extenders. The other extender types – educator and empathizer – have little interaction with builders.

The Expert-Extender and the Builder share a few common praxis traits. Both appreciate some independence and feel that structure can get in the way. Both enjoy problem solving. Both want to be involved in details in a hands-on way. Here the similarities end. The Extender has low time urgency while the Builder is always in a hurry. The Builder introduces change while the Extender seeks continuity. The Extender seeks permission to act; the Builder just goes off and does things claiming, “it is better to seek forgiveness than ask permission”. The Builder looks to improve the system and subordinates the person in the process; the Extender is exactly the opposite and has interest in satisfaction of the person even if it means compromising the system.

The polarity between ‘yesterday’ and ‘tomorrow’ results in both groups wanting to have little to do with one another. And fortunately interactions in the business world are only occasional. The most common interactions are when builders need a particular expertise at certain stages of discovery or proof of concept. When the needed expertise is an established technology and not leading edge, the Builder must call upon the expert-extender for their contribution. In such situations the expert is flattered to be asked and truly enjoys providing the requested help. The connection seems like a win-win and will remain so as long as the Extender’s work is considered as just a subcontracted element in the overall project. If the Extender expects or the Builder offers a larger voice in the strategic planning and subsequent execution, the differences in their praxis will create friction.

On occasion a builder might find himself or herself working in a business unit during its extending lifecycle stage. If this assignment is to carry out a diversification, then the discussion in the preceding section should apply. If this assignment is because the Builder has some specialized technical or discipline knowledge or because the Builder is a capable problem solver for a customer support position, then the Builder is being asked to behave in a manner similar to the other expert-extender employees. The Builder may have a difficult time with this assignment unless they modify their praxis traits in a few key areas.

- *Continuity.* The expert-extender appreciates the continuity of continuing with yesterday’s knowledge. The Builder must avoid suggesting change. Furthermore, the Builder is advised to give up all hope of introducing improvements into this job situation.
- *Patiently Listen.* Expert-extenders like to tell stories about situations where others have benefited from their assistance, and of course they like people who listen to their stories. Builders are not very active listeners, and will quickly be excluded from companionship unless they show interest in listening to their extender co-workers. These stories will be long and extend chapter after chapter thereby requiring the Builder to call upon uncharacteristic patience.
- *In Bounds Solutions.* Many expert-extenders are employed to solve problems brought to their attention. They are expected to propose the best solution within some well-established boundaries. Additional solutions outside the established boundaries may also exist. The Extender’s limited creativity, appreciation of rules, and low tolerance for risk means they easily stay in-bounds. The Builder – seeing the opportunity to suggest changes – may start experimenting with out of bound solutions to which business unit management may react negatively.

- *Customer Satisfaction.* In addition to fine technical skills, expert-extendors in customer service positions are gentle communicators with customers. If builders are to succeed, they must remove their rough edges and work on suppressing their normal direct and brash style.

Builders may be able to intellectually comply with these recommendations but will have to work doubly hard to suppress telegraphing discontent through their body language [note, Extenders are exceptionally good at reading body language]. As a result the final recommendation for builders is to accept the fact that the extender environment is what it is, give up trying to change anything, and seek other opportunities in new environments.

THE BUILDER'S TASKS BY FUNCTION

Traditional thinking has the Builder working in a product development function. There are however plenty of other opportunities where timely introduction of changes or new programs are important to a business.

MARKETING. The most important contribution made by the builder-marketer is researching, selecting, documenting and publicizing the value proposition of the new product, service, or customer segment. Often in parallel with the value proposition is another strategic choice – determining the first market segment to focus upon. If either choice is incorrect, the business will fail to win anticipated business. Builders approach this responsibility with a combination of thoughtful reasoning [the Builder is constantly asking why] followed by trial and error experimentation. Once a hypothesis is in place, the Builder simply jumps in, calls a few customers, and tests ideas. Along the way there will be some mistakes that necessitate backing up and starting again.

The discovery activity of this important strategic work is swamped by an endless array of tactical validation and encoding activity that puts to test the builder's praxis traits of multi-tasking, drive, and organization. The first sales collateral must be developed [based upon the value proposition and targeted to the focused segment of course], customer input for prioritization of initial product features is gathered and processed, the sales channel is trained, the business must get noticed by press/analysts/customers, sales initial customers are identified, other departments such as support are expecting the new business to satisfy the needs of the other departments processes, etc. All the while the builder-marketer is learning from their mistakes and getting smarter about how to address the overall opportunity. Success in this stage demands individuals with cyclopraxis that can both juggle and prioritize the chaos of multiple simultaneous activities, who are articulate about the product and its values, who communicate well enough to keep dozens of co-workers informed, and who are not at all afraid to change course upon discovery of a mistake. Over attention to customer satisfaction is actually counter productive during the building stage as it may impair reaching the goals set by the business unit.

SALES. As a business unit moves into the building stage and first products move from vaporware to slide-ware to demo-ware to alpha to beta to shipment, the sales function gets added. The channels/sales organization must be initially populated with builder-praxis and with a sales manager capable of facilitating a series of decentralized experiments. Early sales attempts are simply discovery through experiments—activity that Builders enjoy. Builder-salespersons will work very closely with builder-marketers as the experiment outcomes are understood, the trial value propositions get adjusted, and other elements of the marketing mix are tweaked. Most importantly some patterns of success will start to emerge – certain industries will lead and a battle proven sales process -- prospecting/demo-ing/trials/close-ing; -- will start to take shape. At this point, sales manager must assert leadership, recognize the patterns [perhaps with the help of builder-marketers], encode the learning into a first-market recipe and ultimately rally the team around the one chosen recipe. Builder-marketers must also rally around the same validated first-market. The builder-praxis is good at trial and error experimentation, evaluating the inherent tradeoffs of one choice versus another, communicating those choices well, multitasking to get various implementations going, and working under time pressure. Once key choices are made, the business unit is ready to implement on a broader scale.

A personality-style classification commonly used for sales teams is “hunter” and “farmer” – a distinction that's very useful in the study of the evolution of a business unit. Briefly put, “hunters” are better at winning new accounts, and

“farmers” are better at gaining additional business from existing accounts. The personality styles correlate with the overall maturity of the market segment with the “hunters” of course preceding the “farmers”. We need to be careful not to confuse *sales style* with *cyclopraxis*, but instead we should recognize a strong correlation. During the building lifecycle stage, the new business needs a “hunter” style channel team with builder work habits.

As the business-unit progresses into the first part of its capitalizing stage, staffing the sales function goes through another critical period. For certain the “hunter” style is necessary. If staffing additions are hunter-capitalizers, they will readily follow the prescribed rule of selling into the target market with the proven value proposition but they will need to be encouraged to deal with inevitable uncertainty, self-organization, multitasking, creativity, and problem solving challenges. If staffing additions are additional hunter-builders, there will be little problem with uncertainty, organization, multitasking, creativity, and problem solving. Instead the challenges will be in having the hunter-builders all follow the proven recipe of selling into the target market with winning value propositions. The choice between alternatives should be governed by the desire to open additional target markets or find additional value propositions versus the desire to create a tornado in the identified initial market.

MANUFACTURING/OPERATIONS. [Note, the manufacturing/operations function may not be responsible for the business unit’s very first deliveries, as the development squad may provide the first few billable events.] Of course if manufacturing/operations is outsourced, it will be the outsourcer who is responsible for the actual activity. Still, the business unit’s builders will need to partner with the outsourcer for a great deal of the planning and initiation. The negotiative and educational builder-outsourcer communication may well be more intense than the structured capitalizer-outsourcer communication that will follow. Near the end of the building phase, follow-on product releases will start to occur. Regardless of the status of outsourcing, the manufacturing builder will need to develop a 90% good enough engineering release to manufacturing process [due to limited resources spread over a high number of activities 90% across the board may be as much completion as is possible. This is a pragmatic compromise that the builder-praxis is best able to make.

Builders are not likely to continue very long in the manufacturing organization once things have mainstreamed in the capitalizing stage. The builder praxis and the capitalizer praxis do not interact very well. Capitalizers will be outnumbering builders by at least ten to one. And the builder’s natural instincts for change will at some point impair the overall efficiency of the operation. Hopefully, not all the builders depart immediately however. There are always some additional manufacturing/operations tasks that can be worked on by the builder-praxis during the capitalizing stage: establishing a spares pipeline, choosing hiring practices that can grow the workforce with capitalizer-praxis individuals, and assessing whether to move to lower cost labor assembly. These are challenges that were delayed during initial building due to more urgent tasks. In addition the Builder may enjoy taking many of the 90% complete activities to 95%, 98% or even 99% complete.

DEVELOPMENT. As the authoring development engineers move on to the next authoring challenge, builder-style development engineers succeed them [Builder-praxis development engineers do not do well at product authoring opportunities because their strong pragmatism and interest in adapting to trends stops them before they attempt such high risk and bold breakthrough programs.] Builders fill in the details around the unknowns in the author’s vision. Sometimes the details are the result of solid design calculations. Other times trial and error is necessary. The Builder approaches the same unknowns by simply jumping in, forming hypotheses, running experiments, making mistakes, backing up, and starting again. To the author, this seems to be a great deal of fuss, but these are essential steps as “the devil is in the detail”. The Builder is learning with each step and miss-step. After many weeks and dozens of tries, the Builder has lots of information on what is working and not working and is actually quite close to being able to design the solution. Builders are also excellent at finding the optimum balance between difficult – often multi discipline -- design tradeoffs.

The builder-praxis attention to detail, multi-tasking, communication, and organization are necessary to take the author's idea forward to detailed design and release to manufacturing or sales. Just as we saw that builder development engineers do not do well at product authoring, an author-praxis engineer does not excel in the building part of the lifecycle. The level of detail and the barrage of multiple simultaneous tasks endemic to the building stage are uninteresting to the author praxis. Capitalizer engineers are also ill suited for the builder job because they struggle on many of the first time challenges that the builder-praxis enjoys.

MANAGING BUILDERS

Builders are a valuable asset to most any business unit. As with most individuals paying careful attention to their needs can result in maximum output. This section comments upon management techniques specific to the builder population – both as individuals and as a population.

INDIVIDUAL BUILDER MANAGMENT

The cornerstone of managing builders is the axiom “builders like to be busy and be around busy people.” With this foundation, it is easy to recognize if a builder's manager wants to earn the builder's respect, they should work diligently alongside the builder; a great relationship will develop. ‘Slackers’ annoy a builder, so keep them away.

When the Builder does a good job, reward them with quick recognition and another even more challenging assignment. The Builder will be excited and feel rewarded by additional complexity and broader challenge. If you can honestly claim that the Builder being rewarded nudged out several other top builders for the new opportunity, be sure to communicate that fact; it will reward the builder's competitive spirit. Increasing responsibility – but not by people management promotion -- is another positively received reward.

Builders do not take too much management. Simply assign them the task, make sure they understand the overall strategy, share as much ‘why’ as possible, and jointly set a timeline. The Builder will figure out how to accomplish results. You might explore how to measure the success they will ultimately achieve. Builders are usually outgoing and enjoy communicating so check in regularly and give them a chance to provide an update. Celebrate the achievement of solving intermediate problems. Re-direct only if things are way off course. Otherwise ask them what their next 3-5 priorities are and discuss why these are most important.

Upon satisfactory completion, reward quickly with a new assignment and a cash or stock bonus that is directly tied to the prior accomplishment.

If you must put a builder person into a capitalizing or extending position, manage closely task-by-task, accomplishment-by-accomplishment; else the Builder will get impatient, create their own excitement, and start proposing unwanted changes.

BUILDER POPULATION MANAGEMENT

The large company is advised to retain sufficient numbers of builders in order to commercialize new opportunities and in order to provide necessary change to keep pace with the times. Diversification is another word to describe the process of commercializing new opportunities, and reengineering is another word to describe necessary modernizing change. The builder-diversifier or builder-reengineer will be many times more effective than capitalizers or extenders in assuring continued competitiveness. All too often the people who staff these efforts – regardless of whether they are builders, capitalizers, or extenders -- are described as being on ‘special assignment’. While it may send a positive message to capitalizers or extenders, the ‘special assignment label’ sends a very negative message to the builder. The message to the Builder is that upon completion they will be expected to return to a mainstream position [which is of course less interesting to the builder]. An equally strong negative message is that there is no career path for exactly the kind of work the Builder enjoys most. Finally, there is no clarity for the rest of the organization as to whether the

Builder was given this position as a penalty box assignment or in recognition of special skills. To avoid the ‘special assignment’ trap, companies are encouraged to adopt a targeted set of human relations practices to manage and retain builders. Specific recommendations must be individual to each firm. Some suggestions might include:

- *Key executive mentors.* Such high level individuals can provide the Builder with 1)visibility 2)customized communication of company strategies 3)special insights and advanced knowledge of important changes and 4)special coaching on balanced delivery of change messages to the established organization.
- *Identified pool of builder projects.* Many companies treat building opportunities as ‘special assignments’. Besides sending the aforementioned negative messages to builders, the ‘special assignments’ label discourages senior management from proactively and systematically identifying possibilities. When builder talent becomes available by virtue of completion of a prior task, the queue may not be properly stocked. Companies are advised to systematically pool builder opportunities. Builders will be excited to realize that there is plenty of opportunity in their funnel.
- *Special pay ranges.* The measures of a builder’s value to the organization are different than the measures of a capitalizer’s value [sales, profit, budget, efficiency, headcount metrics], measures of an author’s value [creative new ideas], or measures of an extender’s value [satisfaction, breadth of expertise]. Sales people have special compensation schemes. Many companies have created a technical career and compensate based on industry recognition. It is naturally appropriate to have a builder’s compensation plan with parameters potentially including breadth of project, timeliness of task completion, strategic impact, and acceptance by established organization.
- *Career category recognition.* Along with special pay ranges, other steps are appropriate to create the perception amongst builders that they belong to an accepted career category and are not some temporary organizational accident. Appropriate branding, minimum entry criteria, career migration, and human *relations counselors are a few requisite steps.*
- *Continuing education.* The standard corporate training programs intended for extenders and capitalizers are less relevant to the builder praxis. Important are advanced tricks for time management, executive MBA’s in strategic implementation, change management principles, re-engineering principles, and leading edge development and marketing practices. Survey builders to see what they feel are appropriate and then plan a curricula for each of the functions.

Additional practices are possible. Companies may choose to utilize the 5 S’s of Human relations [Staffing, Skills, Systems, Structure, and Strategy] as a framework from which to identify possible additions.

SUMMARY

Builders are the business people responsible for commercializing most new businesses either as startups or new business units in established firms. The builder praxis must include three key traits: a curious mind to discover through experimentation an appropriate recipe, a strong self-efficacy to prescribe the recipe for others to follow, and a self initiating task accomplishing demeanor. More specifically,

Builders conceptualize and theorize readily and translate possibilities into plans to achieve short-term and long-term objectives. They readily see illogical and inefficient procedures and feel a strong urge to correct them. They set their own standards and are forceful in applying these to others, to organizations, and to themselves. They are independent, trust their own perceptions and judgments more than those of others, value intelligence and competence and abhor mess, waste, and inefficiency. Builders can be tough when the situation calls for toughness. They are analytical, logical, and objectively critical, decisive, clear, and assertive. They are intellectually curious, seek new ideas, like complex problems, and readily synthesize complicated theoretical and abstract matters. Builders are keenly aware of the intricate connections within organizations and are action-oriented and strategic. They create a general structure and devise strategies to achieve their goals. Builders think ahead, anticipate problems, devise broad plans and systems, and marshal the human and material resources to achieve goals. They make logical decisions and are excellent long-range planners. They see things from a global perspective. They are generally disinterested in routine maintenance activities, preferring the stimulation of new challenges. They love and are energized by stimulating interactions with people. Builders have a clear vision of future possibilities and the organization and drive to implement this future.

Builders are happiest when they are accomplishing results against difficult challenges – in other words, working hard. Structure and process later in the lifecycle and defocusing ideas earlier in the lifecycle are negative motivators and will diminish Builder’s accomplishments. Builders are not particularly good at following the establishment’s rules and procedures nor are silent about their dislike and may therefore upset those who develop and administer them. Writing the playbook for tomorrow is more important than following the rulebook of today. Builders are energized in their daily work simply by accomplishments. They are further energized by their belief that the resulting change and improvement will be beneficial for the organization. And Builders will thrive on facing the risks inherent in realizing a success. The specific strengths of the Builder are necessary for new businesses commercialization and re-engineering of established businesses. They are an important part of the lifecycle for both the small startup business and the large diversifying business. Unfortunately, few businesses understand this resource and even fewer have effective programs to manage, reward, protect, and renew their builders.

The builder’s vantage point is very different from others and mainstream employees don’t score especially well through the builder’s lens. Most politely, builders see the mainstream praxis –capitalizers and extenders – as resistive to improvement and as doomed to a downward spiral. More honestly they find issue with work ethic, perspective, ambition, sense of urgency. A similar critique is true about how others see the builder. Authors are subconsciously thankful for building [else there wouldn’t be much progress on the author’s ideas]. But authors and builders frequently clash over differences in style. Senior managers are thoughtfully thankful for diversifying energy in the firm. But senior managers have only limited interactions with these very same builders. And capitalizers and extenders find builders insensitive, impatient, and pushy.

Such difficulty in acceptance by the varied praxes of a large firm explains why many builders practice their passion in smaller companies. In the startup, the Builder doesn’t initially have interactions with capitalizers and extenders.

Similar articles about the Builder, Capitalizer, and Extender are being prepared. Watch for them at www.cyclopraxis.com.

Other papers on CycloPraxis available at www.cyclopraxis.com include:

- CycloPraxis in the Business World
- CycloPraxis Authors
- Author, Builder, Capitalizer, and Extender CycloPraxis Work Preferences
- Round Pegs in Round Holes ... Matching Worker’s CycloPraxis to the Job
- Applying Worker CycloPraxis to the Paradox of Why Large Firms Suddenly Fail to Innovate
- Prior Research Related to Company Life Cycles and its application to the Study of CycloPraxis
- ActiPraxis Classification of Work
- Praxis and Nurses
- Praxis and Realtors
- CycloPraxis and Crossing the Chasm
- CycloPraxis and the Inventor’s Solution
- CycloPraxis and ActiPraxis Bibliography

BIBLIOGRAPHY SPECIFIC TO THIS PAPER

See “CycloPraxis and ActiPraxis Bibliography” at www.cyclopraxis.com for additional reading

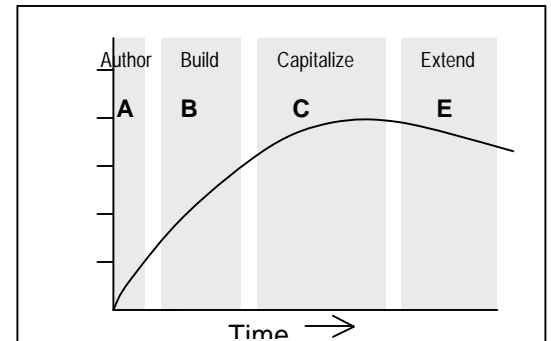
- Campbell D. J., [1988]. Task complexity: A review and analysis. *Academy of Management Review*, 13, 40-52
- Govindarajan, Vijay & Trimble, Chris [2005]“Building Breakthrough Businesses Within Established Organizations”, *Harvard Business Review*, 4-2005
- Holden, Power Based Selling
- Johnson, D., [2006] “CycloPraxis in the Business World”, www.cyclopraxis.com,
- Johnson, D., [2005] “Applying Worker CycloPraxis to the Paradox of Why Large Firms Fail to Innovate”, www.cyclopraxis.com,
- Johnson, D., [2005]“CycloPraxis Authors”, www.cyclopraxis.com, 2005
- Leifer Leifer, R, McDermott, C. M., O’Connor, G. C., Peters, L, Rice, M. Veryzer, R [2000] *Radical Innovation: How Mature Companies Can Outsmart Upstarts*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.
- Maccoby, M, [2003]. *The Productive Narcissist*, New York, NY: Random House.
- Moore, Geoffrey A, [1991] *Crossing the Chasm*, HarperCollins, New York, NY.
- Reinertsen, Donald G. [1997], *Managing the Design Factory*, The Free Press, New York, NY.
- www.disc.com
- www.enneagraminstitute.com

CYCLOPRAXIS OVERVIEW

Adapted from the paper “CycloPraxis in the Business World”, Doug Johnson, 2005, www.cyclopraxis.com

The classic match between worker and job is function: operations, manufacturing, marketing, finance, sales, development, legal, nursing, teaching, plumbing, retailing,. Business schools organize their classes this way, help wanted ads are organized this way, and career ladders are designed this way. There is another and equally important dimension to the fit between workers and their jobs: CycloPraxis. “Praxis” is one’s “customary practice or conduct”, meaning the way we naturally do things. Adding “cyclo” aligns a worker’s praxis to the stage in a business unit’s overall evolution: start-up, growth, maturity, and decline.

The first lifecycle stage is Authoring [A – for short]. This is where an innovative idea is championed and developed and where the business is initiated. The second stage is Building [B]. This is when innovations become products, early customers partnerships form, markets explode, operations begin, finance and quality and human resource functions begin, first processes are initiated. Next comes the need to maximize output in a stage called Capitalizing [C]. In this stage the business unit reaches its full potential, generates the most substantial profits or best resource utilization, repeatedly wins customers and delivers maximum value. Since all contributions someday diminish in value, the smart business will begin Diversifying [D] by leveraging the rewards of capitalizing business units. Finally, every business unit reaches its peak and begins a long and slow Extending [E] stage. Marketplace rewards erode as demand falls and remaining competition intensifies due to standardization, saturation, and better performing alternatives. The business unit focus shifts from customer acquisition to customer retention. Knowledge experts and appreciative customer service are key volume drivers for sustained business.



Each of these four lifecycle stages of a business unit inherently attracts employees with different cyclopraxis. What entrepreneur would apply to work in an end of life business unit where opportunity identification is sharply curtailed and where the principle activity is strong individual customer intimacy? Conversely, what helpfulness-oriented employee would tackle a new venture without any customers? In between, one finds project managers who are most successful after the idea or initiative is well conceived but before the same work is done multiple times. And the most efficient at repetitive production would look at early growth challenges and exclaim “how do I get started, where are the processes?”

There is nothing new about the concept of the lifecycle of a business and the organizations that participate in birth, growth, profits, and decline. The new concept around CycloPraxis is the connection around a worker’s natural semi-conscious work style preferences and the business lifecycle. Observations of hundreds of workers in wide ranging disciplines suggest 4 meaningful praxes. The first praxis is made up of a small percentage of people that are always having fresh new ideas. A smaller percentage of those idea people go on to champion those ideas year after year until they are proven correct. Further observation identifies a second group of people who seek challenging accomplishments around unsolved problems and who see them through to completion with unwavering focus to task. This second praxis thrives upon getting-it-done, whatever ‘it’ is. Upon completion of ‘it’, they simply look for another assignment. The second group rarely has the original idea and if called upon to propose the new idea might struggle to muster the appropriate spontaneous creativity. A third praxis – and by far the majority -- thrives when there is predictability and a defined structure in which they contribute to the profitability or effective resource utilization of the business unit. They enjoy situations where their output is measured and often tied to pay. Key players are often making incremental improvements in processes, products, efficiencies, yield, and costs. A fourth praxis enjoys work environments where they can apply their expert knowledge, solve the problems of customers, or engage in training. This last praxis creates lasting value with their contribution.

The preceding lifecycle discussion is optimized around the manufacturing corporation. Nevertheless, the same lifecycle concepts can be found in many other business types. Consider a professional practice. The Authoring phase is trivially short; Building – practice startup -- must still occur. Then the professional settles into a long career of capitalizing. The extend phase may be short [sale of practice] or long [services offered part time for little or no fee while in active retirement]. Or consider a Main Street USA business that is a franchise of some established chain. Generally the business owner goes the franchise route because they have anxieties about the building phase and the franchise package permits capitalization to happen sooner.

AUTHORS: The authors’ – entrepreneurs, architects, and visionaries -- greatest strength is the ability to conceive and champion an idea. Authors are risk takers, relatively unstructured, revolutionary, bold, and hold a stubborn persistence to their own ideas. Authors are most fruitful when they and their idea have little organizational grounding. Many feel more comfortable working outside the processes of the large firm; consequently they initiate many startups with VC help. Those authors who do remain in large firms are the idea originators of most new business units. Others see, authors as overconfident and unrealistic about the business appeal of their ideas. Authors are most happy being creative and are constantly offering hypotheses and ideas to everyone around them. Authors are most unhappy when they are not permitted to express their creativity or when others fail to rally to their ideas.

But the same personality traits that are strengths in the author-praxis work against success later in the evolution of the business unit. Authors generally disdain details, financial controls, and aggressive marketing. They often are poor at leading, communicating, and delegating. Authors are frequently disruptive to teams due to narcissist driven competition for best idea. As a result the classic challenge facing many business units – startup or large firm -- is the succession plan of the original author-entrepreneur.

BUILDERS like authors are strong initiators. They play an absolutely fundamental role in the growth of new business units. In product development, they are responsible for commercializing the author's idea. Builders institute the quality control, the first operations, the delivery, the support, the financial controls, the value proposition, the sales recipe, and the first marketing collaterals. Builders are highly organized, energetic, excellent problem solvers, very pragmatic, prolific communicators, and able to simultaneously work on a phenomenal number of tasks. Builders fearlessly run lots of experiments looking for the right recipe and learn rapidly from their mistakes. They work long hours and hold accomplishing the goal above all else [even above employee relations]. The builder-praxis is driven by achievement of goal, and once achieved they need something else to build or they become unhappy.

Unlike the author, a builder needs to be better grounded either with someone else's idea or affiliated with an organization. Builders are strong drivers and push organizations hard, and so once again the same personality traits that make a builder-praxis successful in the expansion stage also limits its effectiveness later in the evolution. Builders are seen by others as impatient, insensitive to people, and overly type "A". They are poor leaders of the large number of effective capitalizers because the builder drives the capitalizer with endless urgent improvements rather than focusing on people management, team motivation, and predictability. The builder's narrow pragmatism – a strength during the building stage – not only inhibits their effectiveness at authoring new ideas but also limits their sensitivity to the motivation needs of the large sales, marketing, and manufacturing populations to follow.

CAPITALIZERS -- due to their attention to detail, excellence in following established processes, and their penchant for steady improvement -- are key to a business's profitable existence. Capitalizers appreciate a structured work environment and delight in repeatedly executing the plan with constant gradual improvement. The setting and meeting of work quotas energizes the capitalizer-praxis. Capitalizers have a stronger people and profit/resource orientation than either the author or the builder. Taken together, these traits increase the business unit's efficient use of resources. During the capitalizing stage, firms gain pay back on the initial investments of authoring and building the new business unit. Business revenues and operational efficiencies reach their peak. And happily, the motivated capitalizer will enjoy growing personal their financial reward.

Working together with capitalizers in this middle stage are *Captains* who fill the role of people management, strategic leadership, and continual improvement of the process and structured work environment. Captains have strong regard for hierarchy and may go by the titles of foreman, supervisor, manager, and vice president. The captain's primary responsibility is continual stewardship of the successful work output from the business unit's capitalizer population. There are lots of straightforward management and leadership tasks [planning, organizing, delegating, controlling] and tools [quality circles, continuing education, ...] associated with the captain's role.

The distinction between Builders and Captains must be made carefully, as many captains want to be builders and vice versa. Builders have an achievement need and are passionate about getting things done. Captains are energized by power and are very satisfied to achieve things by getting others to do them. As a result captains delegate better than any other praxis. People with a need for power feel strong when others react appropriately to them. The best executives feel good when their influence works to make their people grow and be effective. As long as they feel in control, they do not need the constant feedback that builder achievement-motivate people crave. Success is dependent upon the captain's motivational skills, management and leadership savvy, and achieving targeted profits. Success is rewarded with visible perks [corner office, company car] and formal promotions. The captain is happy when things are trending up and to the right

The author and the builder sees the capitalizer and captain as resisting change, unimaginative, unable to identify and solve problems, and too comfortable with 'average'. On the other hand, the capitalizer/captain sees the builder as disruptive, brash, and threatening to the predictable productive environment. Authors in the eyes of the capitalizer/captain are just frivolous idea guys who will likely never amount to anything. Perceptions aside, capitalizers and captains are less effective at authoring or building because neither stage is predictable, because there are no processes, and because of less developed imagination and problem solving skill. Capitalizers are reluctant to deal with the unknown. On an individual's level, capitalizers who draw building or authoring assignments frequently under-perform against management expectations. At the business unit level, the Capitalizer's traditionalism traits can scuttle important diversification. The capitalizer doesn't want their comfortable status quo to change and they frequently resist adjusting to changing market conditions. Sluggish adjustment by capitalizers and captains to a changing landscape prematurely erodes many business units

DIVERSIFIERS: Externally aware and enlightened capitalizers who recognize the enormous challenges a business faces with eventual obsolescence of its core value proposition encourage diversification. Simply re-applying authoring and building accomplishes diversification. Diversifier-builder encounters special challenges.

EXTENDERS: To maximize profits and resource utilization as the lifecycle extends the business unit should employ workers with appropriate praxes – one we call extenders. During the extending lifecycle stage, retaining existing customers is the key strategic

principle. Customer retention is accomplished through a combination of expert assistance, sympathetic customer care, ongoing education of the product/service’s values, and of course just enough value at the right price. The extender praxis is comprised of educators, empathizers, and experts who are all energized by being helpful. Extenders are energized by customer satisfaction challenges, and will show tenacity and creative problem solving skills in pursuit of a solution. The resulting course of action will frequently achieve a great deal with very little invested; often the personal 1:1 helpful attention has significant impact. Extenders are also personally rewarded from both the ‘thank you’ they get from the customer and from the knowledge that their efforts are allowing the firm to build a new business somewhere else. Extenders are helpful, trustworthy, sociable, structured and enjoy the variety that comes with each customer’s unique problem. The expert-extender is passionate about reusing the knowledge they already have about products, markets, and customers. The empathizer-extender lives for the satisfaction of making a positive difference in the day of someone else. Most extenders prioritize providing their special brand of care over maximizing company profits and personal income.

Extenders are not as effective at other business unit stages. The extender’s interest in closure, continuity, and completeness over deadlines and quotas means builders and capitalizers will out perform the extender at building and capitalizing. Indeed, a source of tension exists with capitalizers who become frustrated by the extender’s apparent disinterest in efficient delivery. Another mismatch exists with capitalizers who organize work according to a predictable schedule and the extender who extends each engagement thinking that more assistance is better.

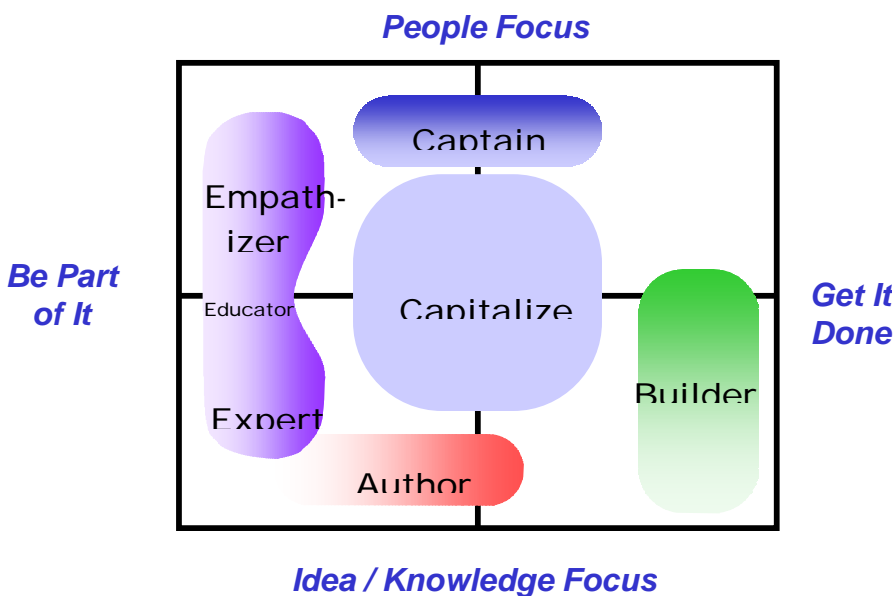
PRINCIPLES: 4 simple principles of cyclopraxis assist in applying the concepts to business situations.

- #1: Workers are happiest and most productive when their praxis matches the business unit life cycle. Each stage – A, B, C, and E -- is best staffed by employees whose cyclopraxis [natural way of working] aligns with the nature of the work required in that stage.
- #2: A mismatch is as challenging to a worker’s productivity as a function [Development vs Sales vs Human Resources vs Finance vs Etc.] mismatch.
- #3: The praxes do not get along very well with one another and this leads to employee turnover. The reason for discord between the praxes is that they each have their unique means of dealing with any specific business problem. These unique approaches are grounded in their strengths
- #4: The culture and operating style of any business is set by the CycloPraxis of the employees

SUMMARY: The preceding sections use a large number of adjectives to describe authors, builders, capitalizers/captains, and extenders. By doing so, everyone is sure to connect in some way with the overall paradigm of cyclopraxis. The downside is “descriptor overload”. Absent is a simple model for visual learners. Therefore the accompanying diagram is offered as a visual aide for the subset of the general population for which the chosen adjectives are meaningful.

One dimension is the subject of our work attention: ‘People \leftrightarrow Idea/Knowledge’. The other dimension is sense of urgency, which has surfaced as a key business driver in this modern age. ‘Get-it-Done \leftrightarrow Keep-it-Going’. Other continuums were explored including ‘risk’, ‘attractiveness of pay’, ‘customer service’, and ‘predictability’. None yield as clean a visual aide as those chosen.

PRAXIS People / Task



Authors concentrate on ideas and tend to avoid translating those ideas to performing businesses. As a result, they predominantly fall in the ‘Keep it Going’ range. Builders have a strong ‘get it done’ focus and generally subordinate the interests of people in pursuit of task accomplishment. Captains have a strong ‘people’ focus and generally defer task completion until their capitalizers can be lead into accepting. Extenders have a strong drive to ‘Keep it Going’ and may apply this drive around people [empathizers] or knowledge [experts]. Capitalizers are the best rounded of the praxes; and without the need to satisfy any of the previously discussed extreme behaviors the Capitalizer is best suited