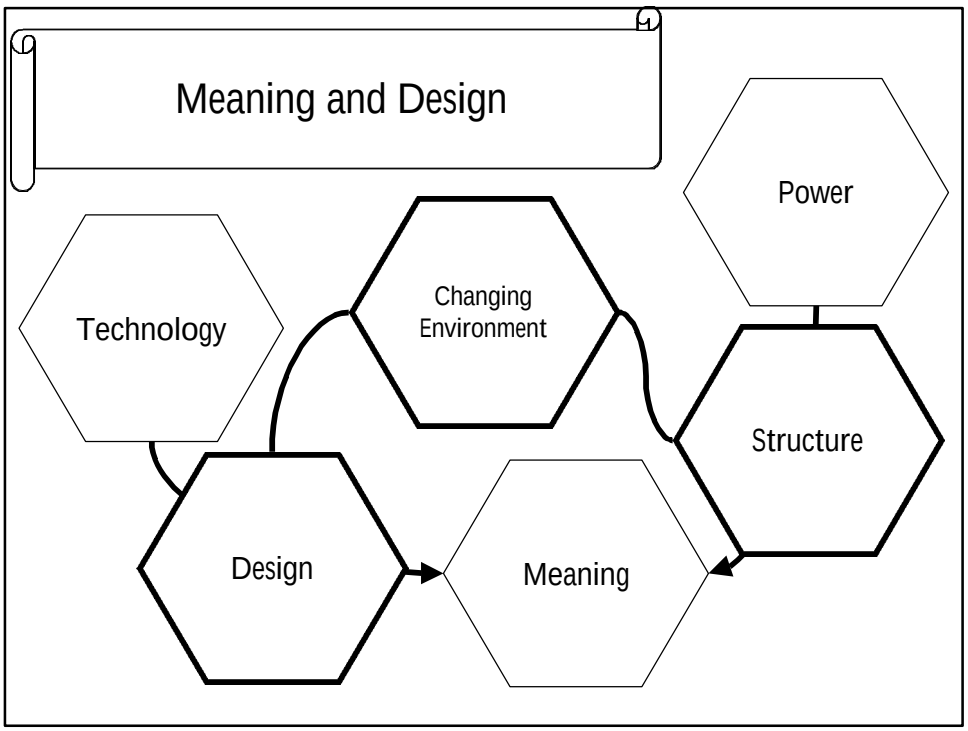


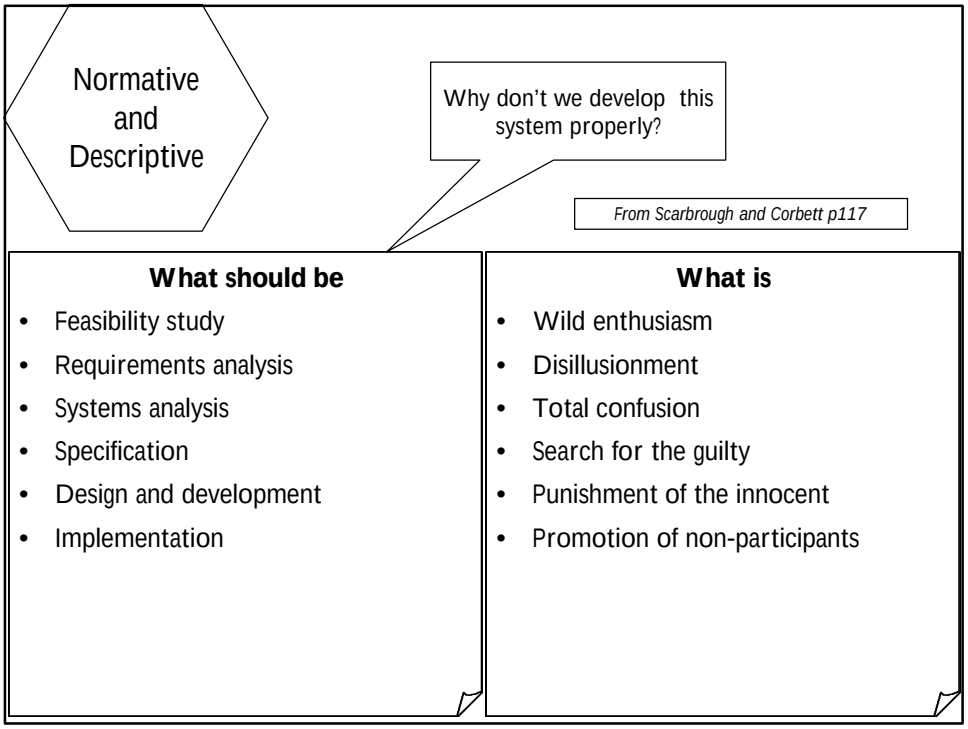


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## Power

- Weber
  - The probability that a person in a relationship will be able to carry out his own will regardless of resistance.
  - Power is exercised by individuals and involves choice, agency and intention
- Marx
  - Structural and independent of the wills of individuals
  - Cannot be separated from economic and class relations
  - Involves class struggle

- Parsons
  - Positive social capacity for achieving communal ends
  - Difficult to distinguish from influence
  - Is spread widely throughout society rather than being concentrated in a social class.
- In conclusion
  - Both repressive and coercive, and at the same time productive and enabling
  - Definitions are still contested

## Intermediate Technology

What I really need is …

**High Tech Failures**

- High Tech solutions in Low Tech environments are costly failures
- They do not work as planned
- They imply and infrastructure that doesn't exist
- They consume much capital for which better opportunities exist
- They need specialised management skills
- They further the ambitions of the supplier

**Middle Tech**

- Study the working practices of users
- Understand the wider network of supplies and capabilities
- Understand the likely effects on the social system
- Design for local materials and manufacture
- Understand the price equations and the true cost of money
- Develop user-focused notions of success

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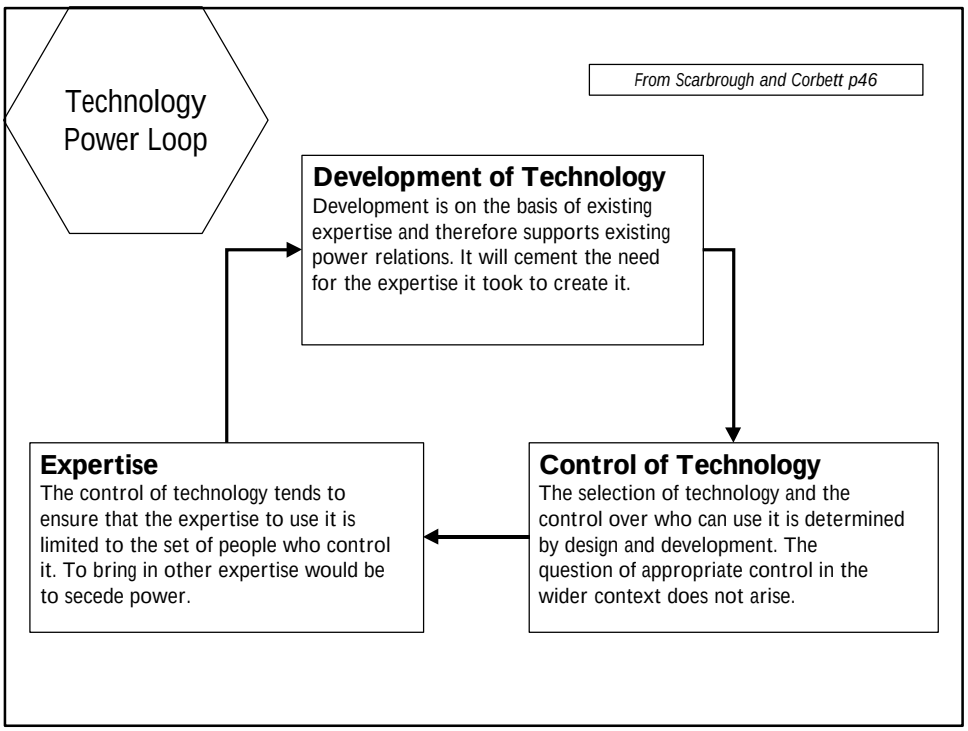


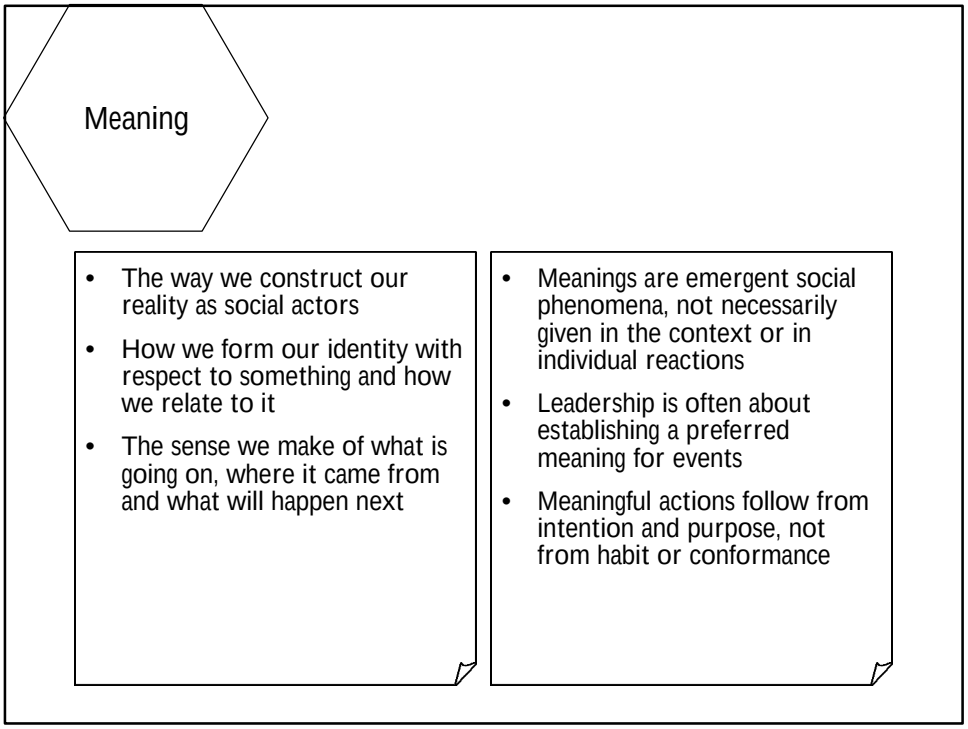


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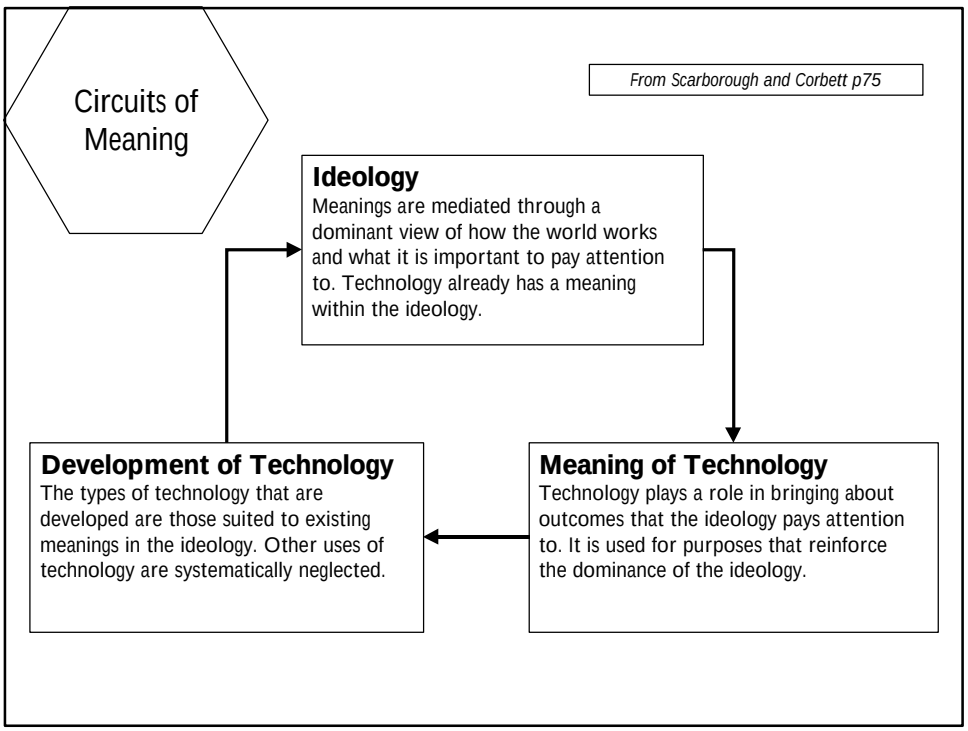


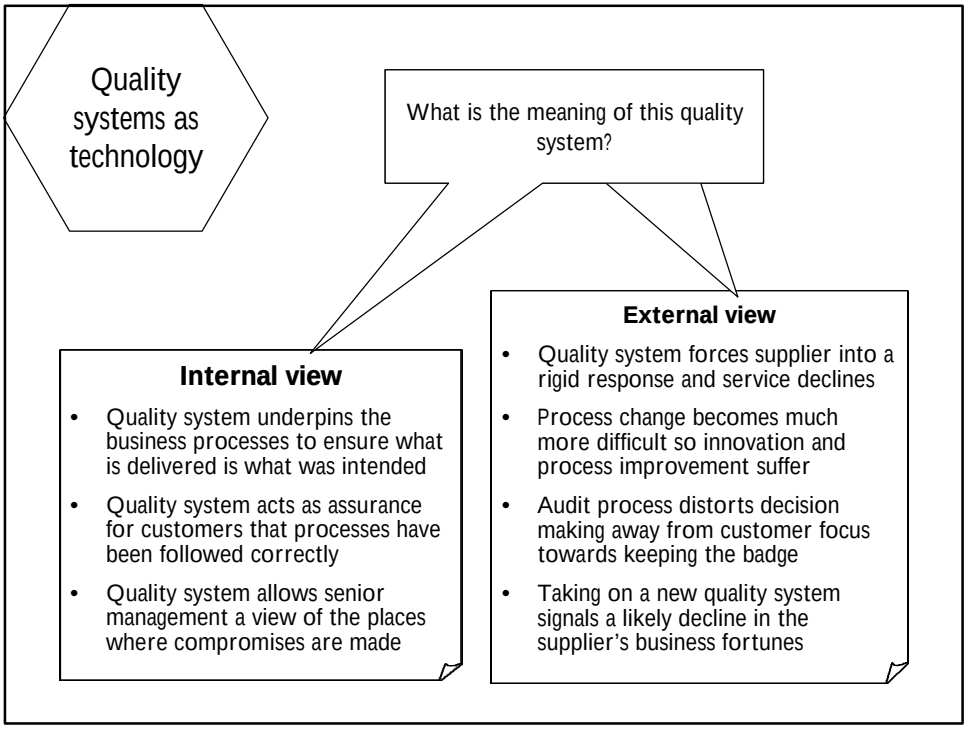


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## Two theories / technolgies

*From Argyris: Flawed advice and the management trap*

| | Governing variables | Action strategies | Consequences |
|---|---|---|---|
| Model 1 | • Control the purpose of the meeting<br>• Maximise winning and minimize losing<br>• Suppress negative feelings<br>• Be rational | • Advocate your position in order to be in control and win, etc.<br>• Unilaterally save face – own and others' | • Miscommunication<br>• Self-fulfilling prophecies<br>• Self-sealing processes<br>• Escalating error |
| Model 2 | • Valid (validatable) information<br>• Free and informed choice<br>• Internal commitment to choice | • Advocate your position and combine with enquiry and public testing<br>• Minimise unilateral face-saving | • Reduction of self-fulfilling, self-sealing, error-escalating processes<br>• Effective problem solving |

## Interpersonal Specifications

Of course I know what you want me to do.

*From Argyris: Flawed advice and the management trap*

**Advice**

- Define intended consequences and actions as clearly and objectively as possible
- Produce as concrete behavioural data as possible. Be objective.
- Act in a supportive, caring manner. Be honest.
- Be open to enquiry: listen actively

**Difficulties**

- Difficult to define for non-routine tasks, difficult to pre-program objectives, especially those that may be embarrassing or threatening. The more precise the definition, the more likely the external commitment. The more likely the external commitment, the less likely that individuals at the local level will question the specifications
- Producing concrete behavioural data is a process of reconstructing what happened, which means making inferences. The defensive reasoning that inhibits valid inferences is rarely addressed
- Model 1 acts of support, caring and honesty lead to further defensiveness and self-reinforcing processes that inhibit the learning being sought
- Model 1 leads people to be open and listen actively as long as they can win and be in control. Model 1 also leads them to be unaware of their skillful incompetence in being open and listening actively.

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## Design

- Purpose, intention for something: e.g. having designs on someone
- A concept of how something should or could be: grand designs, qualities that are present by design
- A plan of how to make or achieve something

**Contexts**

- Social systems
- Landscapes
- Civil engineering
- Political systems
- Technology of all sorts
- Art
- Interiors

## Bottlenecks

Design and its meanings are just another system

**Production**

- There is only one place where production is held up
- Increasing production anywhere else can only make the problem worse
- The bottleneck may well be masked by other policies and procedures
- Removing the bottleneck will lead to the discovery of another bottleneck at higher levels of production

**Design**

- The is only one design problem that is preventing successful use of a new technology
- Improving design in other parts of the problem can only make the problem worse
- The design problem is masked by the attempt to emphasise the importance of other technologies
- Solving the design problem leads to a new design problem in a new area of implementation

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## Scenario planning

How can I break out of this loop?

**Articulating a mind-set**

- Why do we do what it is that we do?
- What buried assumptions are there in the way today's decisions lead to tomorrow's decisions?
- What small decisions cast large shadows?
- What don't we know that could cause us to change our minds?

**Looking for Disconfirmation**

- Understanding perception-shaping events
- Listening to remarkable people
- Finding sources of surprise
- Immersion in challenging environments
- Networking sensibilities
- Music

## References

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- Eliyahu Goldratt, *Goal* (Gower 1993)
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