

HANDLING THE REMEDY

ALIGNMENT



A new paradigm for aligning
business and technology solutions

David G. Peterson

Testimonials

I found “Handling the Remedy” to be a bold initiative. It provides an innovative and practical approach in identifying customers’ and their requirements through involvement of each and every personnel within the organization; using a well-designed questioning process. In today’s fast changing environment, customer needs keep changing, therefore regular alignment with the customers is a necessity so that their current needs are being addressed and the changing trends are identified. An insightful and interesting read.

Timir Ghosh



In today’s environment of decentralized support models, ever changing technologies, shrinking budgets and the need to do more with less, Handling the Remedy begins by placing the focus back where it belongs. With almost as many standards to adopt as there are types of industries to apply them to, everyone rushes into the latest trend or industry mandate without remembering the first key to any organization which is an effective alignment of the team under a common understanding. More than any other challenge, this will be the one that will prevent any good company from becoming great and David tackles it head on and accurately. I anticipate the balance of the books and the insight they will bring.

James Bennett



David – Thank you for putting into words an easy to follow process for identifying alignment issues between staff and customers and how to address these issues. In my experience, this is a systemic issue in many companies that is realized by many, but hard to define and quantify. Your book describes the issues and provides an easy to follow identification process. I look forward to the next book in the series!

Bill Thornley



Handling the Remedy is definitely a paradigm shift. I have often wondered if there was a better way to handle a solution that would encompass a wider scope. There have been many situations where the people that worked on solving problems were so isolated in what they are doing or belong to a silo of responsibility that it prevents them from seeing the big picture and seeing the perspective of the customer. Handling the Remedy has taken this into account and proposed a solution. It is an interesting, informative and instructional read. I definitely recommend Handling the Remedy for anyone looking for an overall solution to organizational problems.

Doan Ong



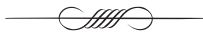
This book is a must read for those wanting to align their businesses in the most optimal way. Handling the Remedy will cause you to think with greater insight about your business; and to come to real, tangible understanding of the relationship between individual departments, the company at large and most importantly, the customer. The first step is admitting you have a problem, and Handling the Remedy will help CEOs and business owners everywhere, to see with absolute clarity what and where the problems are, and begin the process of optimizing their business and their people.

Shaun Jansen



Handling the Remedy touches on a very real issue encountered in IT Operations – differentiating between incidents and improvements. When an organization fails to separate these two activities, it's the enhancements that will take a backseat to incidents. Therefore, recommendations geared towards keeping an organization ahead of their competition will struggle to see the light of day. As David explains, establishing two distinct groups of resources allows both incident resolution and improvement opportunities to be implemented in parallel.

Mike Doyle



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David G. Peterson, Mississauga, Ontario

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Elaine, for holding down the fort and looking after the kids while I embarked on this long journey. To Ray K., for helping me get started and for all the advice. To my wife, family, friends, and editors for their comments, suggestions, and proofreading.

A big thank you! Oh! There's another book!!

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INTRODUCTION

Whether you're an executive or a leader, a company president or a manager, at some point you have spent most of your day working on a technological problem. Technology is the backbone of your organization; it is both your business advantage and your business roadblock.

But how do you convert your technology problems into solutions? How do you go from project failures to success? How do you go from following to leading? How do you get various best-practice solutions to work in harmony? The answer lies within a new paradigm, which I have termed "Handling the Remedy."

Handling the Remedy is the *corpus callosum* – it brings left and right brain thinking together to achieve solutions that are aligned to organizational objectives.

Handling the Remedy is also a holistic methodology by which you can improve the organizational management of solutions through the proper alignment of people, processes and best practices, while building neatly on solutions already in place.

How much time and energy have you used trying to implement best practices in your organization? There's an inherent problem with best practices – think about it. Best practices are comprised of hundreds, if not thousands, of organizations that did an aspect of a process better than others. They were able to do that one task better because their organizational environment supported it. Those tasks were then arranged for other organizations to use as the best solution.

Now, there's nothing wrong with that – or is there? Remember, best practices are formed by various industries,

including agriculture, banking, cosmetics, defense, energy, food, health care, legal, and more. Does your organization involve all of these industries? That's likely not the case! So, instead of adapting your organization to follow the best, align the best to adapt to your organization.

Has your company institutionalized the means for coordinating all undertakings across departments and for aligning all endeavors with customer need? Does the IT department focus solely on the technology of the solution leaving business to decide if organizational objectives are being met? These are among the questions I have addressed in proposing the institutionalization of Handling the Remedy.

Additionally, Handling the Remedy is a means for hard-wiring the measures that prevent organizational fragmentation. It is the means by which a company knows before a project is initiated whether the proposed solution will integrate with and leverage existing technology solutions. Handling the Remedy is the concretization of a managerial philosophy that fully recognizes the need for technology solutions to be more responsive to evolving customer need; it answers the companies' need to maintain their identity and core principles while taking on the structure of adaptability.

The overriding goal of Handling the Remedy is to achieve the best possible organizational alignment with the customer in the most judicious adoption of business and technology solutions. So, though Handling the Remedy is many things, above all, it is a structural feature that vastly facilitates communication across organizational departments while ensuring the greatest possible critical appraisal of the information being communicated.

To summarize Handling the Remedy is:

- The institutionalization of a questioning attitude.
- A holistic, comprehensive, and organic approach to manage solutions company-wide.

- Designed as a repository of recursive intelligence for each solution as it affects the entire enterprise.
- Intelligence that is constantly revised according to a continuous stream of feedback that meets the highest standards of objectivity.
- Both a *conceptual* framework to ensure the optimization of extant and future solutions in terms of the overriding objectives of an enterprise and the *realization* of this framework in concrete, organizational structures.
- The systematic governance of a remedy or remedies in the enterprise. It is the optimal handling of remedies. Just as solutions vary based on the kind of enterprise at issue, the handling of these solutions should also be business-specific.

Specialization of labor is a reality of economic life, with the same kinds of tasks grouped for efficiency within an organization. One widespread managerial practice today involves creating distinct domains of activity. Once these domains are defined, you can better refine relevant management techniques for the greatest yield. However, there is a danger whenever management loses sight of the whole.

In the IT department, for example, tasks are often divided into subsections, or divisions, such as Incident Management, Problem Management and Change Management. At the outset, these domains co-existed, and their subsequent separation has widely been considered a wise move. Before the adoption of Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) processes, for instance, IT departments struggled to maintain control over their own operations, often with end users and customers feeling the brunt of it. This was due to inadequate incident management and the failure to distinguish incidents from problems, a state of tangled affairs made worse by the absence of procedures for apprehending and properly addressing change.

IT departments today are much more complex than they were even just a decade ago, and the challenge now is “what” to manage. Handling the Remedy is crucial in identifying the “what” and ensuring that processes, procedures and people are aligned to achieve management’s organizational objectives.

As business evolves, managerial compartmentalization can become profound. As one gains a better view of individual departments, the organization as a whole tends to go out of focus. In fact, it is sometimes questionable that compartmentalization *does* provide a better view. This would seem to be the case given an analytic model, but what if the various elements that constitute an enterprise cannot be isolated – what if they can only exist as part of a whole?

To determine how things really stand, the next time you end up spending most of your day in a meeting regarding a technology problem due to an incident or project, ask the people present these three questions:

1. List all the products and/or services your company offers?
2. Which products and/or services do you support?
3. How does what you do affect the bottom-line?

When employees are not aware of what their company offers, it means the organization is not informing and updating them on new strategies, future endeavors or products and services that are no longer available. There is a relationship between how employees are kept informed and managerial presuppositions. Employees without practice in taking a holistic view will fall into an atomistic perspective, and they will take this perspective into all areas of the organization. To have informed employees, one must have leaders who communicate with a comprehensive understanding that the employees can then widely disseminate.

The employee who cannot answer one or more of the three questions above is not alone, by any means. Most people find satisfaction in their work when they feel they are contributing

to a part of the larger whole, but it becomes difficult to clearly see this contribution given an analytic model – the model that created managerial domains. The employee, too, must appreciate how what he or she does every day affects the company, and that means that C-suite and call center operator alike would benefit by a more dialectic understanding of the workplace.

A business is not like a picture puzzle that can be taken apart into discrete pieces and then reassembled. A business is much more like an organism. It is the nexus of constitutive relationships, and whether employees grasp this concept makes all the difference in the world. Handling the Remedy is a methodology that permits a given solution to receive the attention it requires without the organizational culture breaking down into silos.

ROADMAP

Handling the Remedy is comprised of three segments. The *first* segment is designed to determine the alignment between employees and an organization. The *second* segment is the framework, which coordinates the alignment of people, processes and best practices. The *third* segment looks at various best practices and how to align them to your organization.

This book focuses on the first segment - Alignment.

To achieve alignment you must first identify your three main customers:

1. The organization
2. The department
3. The division (the department within the department)

Figure 1 shows you your three customers and how they should be aligned to achieve success. It also shows how misaligned you could be.

The next three chapters comprise of exercises, containing seven questions each, designed to measure knowledge and understanding of these customers and to create a baseline.

These exercises are best done anonymously. Alternatively, at your next technology crisis meeting, ask the questions to everyone present and see how well they do collectively.

There are various ways to extrapolate and interpolate the data that you derive from these exercises; some creative ways are provided toward the end of this book.

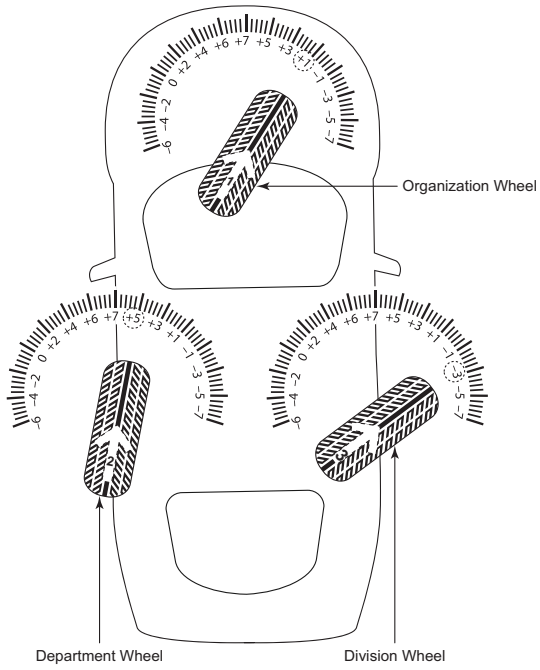
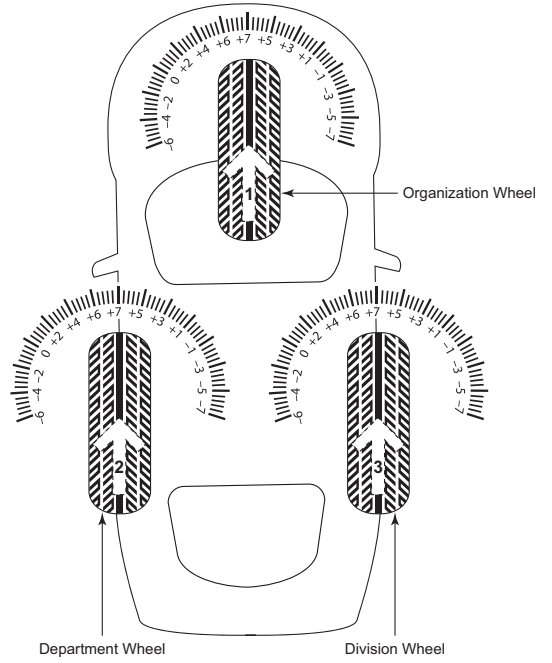


Figure 1

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