

## “Glocalisation” and Organisation

In Moscow, one corner of Red Square is dominated by Christian Dior, while the ex-Soviet infrastructure crumbles and old women beg on the snowy streets. In California, seminar participants are taken on company visits in stretch limousines; there are power cuts in the cities and the new President announces withdrawal from the Kyoto Agreement. In Kenya, the phone and internet lines don't work when it rains, and freshwater lakes in the Great Rift Valley are endangered by farms producing cut flowers for the European market. Here in Sussex, the footpaths are all closed because of Foot & Mouth disease, in spite of the countryside being “open for business”.

These are just a few of the diverse phenomena which we have experienced in our travels recently. Behind all of them, both causing and trying to cope with the

challenges, are human organisations with their structures, leaders and ways of acting. “Glocalisation” is a recently created term intended to indicate the

need for local, context-specific action in a rapidly globalising economy. The quality of management thinking and the values that inform it are increasingly decisive, for good or ill, around the globe.

Our task as consultants is to learn from each unique situation we meet, and to contribute however and wherever we can to enhance the quality of management practice and organisational behaviour.

This issue of Crosscurrents has an international flavour, as well as news about our products and projects. We are delighted to include an article written by one of our clients, a new departure which we hope to continue.



COMPANIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT  
ENTWICKLUNGSBEGLEITER

## Our International Associates – 1. MIRA

**This is the first of a series of short pieces about the groups and individuals around the world with whom Rubicon co-operates. It was through and with MIRA that Steve Briault was able to work with their client dm drogeriemarkt (see “Process Mapping in Retail” in last year's Crosscurrents). We look forward to further co-operation in the future.**

MIRA Companions for Development was founded in 1992 by two of our colleagues from the international Association for Social Development, of which several Rubicon consultants are members. Elaine Beadle and Albrecht Hemming, both with over 20 years' consulting experience in this field, regularly bridge the distance between Europe and Oceania with bases in Germany and New Zealand. Since 1992 they have been joined by Herbert Wolpert who is now based in Germany but was also 7 years

in NZ, Joachim Ziegler and Christoph Lehmann. All are freelance consultants, all work in both English and German, Joachim also in French and Christoph in all the Latin languages – they see themselves as truly international!

‘We foster long-term relationships with our clients,’ they told us, ‘for example 18 years’ mutual commitment with the highly successful retail chain dm drogeriemarkt in Austria.’ However, there is no chance for ‘comfortable old slipper’ syndrome; the group sets high value on research, innovation and self development. Internal workdays four times a year reinforce their own learning organisation, they work together often in projects and they care for their relationships. ‘We actually like each other – it helps a lot!’

‘Maybe what sets us apart is our recognition of individualisation and commitment to working with it as a force for development, our dedication to searching for the ‘why’ of things and our recognition of spirit as a constant companion.’

# Set-up reduction at Portmeirion Potteries Limited

Why set-up reduction?

- Enables faster response to customer needs
- More production flexibility
- Reduced lead-time
- Less adjustments mean fewer errors
- Right first time reduces waste
- Simpler methods are safer
- Less hassle for setters/operators

In March 2001, Rubicon's John Rutter was requested to train a group of personnel from Portmeirion in set-up reduction techniques on their heat release machine.

The team was composed of 2 machine operators, 2 Business Improvement Team members (the internal lean training department), 1 supervisor and 1 senior manager. The current changeover time had already been reduced by John and the team from 70 minutes to 27 minutes during an activity in May 2000.

Targets for the three-day activity were:

- Reduce current 27 minutes changeover time to 15 minutes, in line with the required set-up to runtime ratio.
- Train all personnel in the tools and techniques of set-up to allow them to train others.

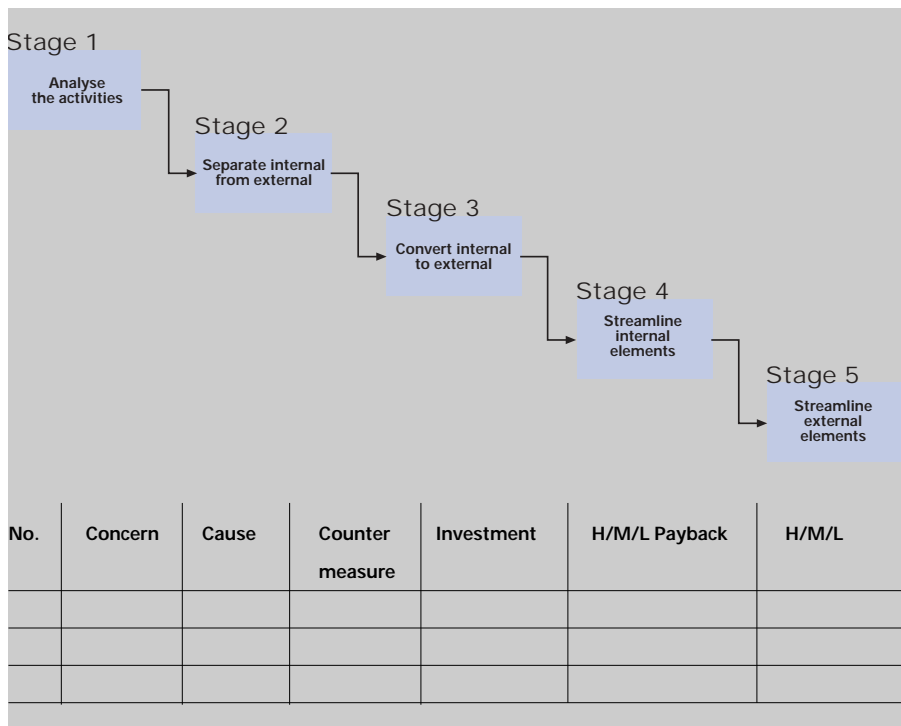
The workshop followed the process below, using video to record and analyse the current methods in use, and distinguishing between internal activities, which can only be performed when the machine is stopped, and external activities, which can be performed while the machine is running.

Ideas for improvement were brainstormed, then recorded on a '3c's chart' (Concern, Cause, Countermeasure – see below).

Low-investment and high-to-medium payback ideas were developed as the priorities, with the following results:

- Set-up time reduced from the current 27 minutes to 13 minutes, with an estimated investment of < £1k.
- Operators fully trained in the concepts and application of set-up reduction.

Next steps at Portmeirion are similar activities in the three and four colour print machines and the spray glaze facility.



## Rubicon in Italy

George Perry is working in Milan with Centauro Maris, a new initiative aiming to address issues of organisational life and personal well-being. He is working with an economist, Rosa Letelier, on a broad range of workshops: professional and personal biography; creative approaches to negotiation and conflict handling; world economics and financial education. Fundamental to the courses is an artistic and therapeutic element and consequently both doctors and artists are involved in the centre. George offers Form Drawing, a process of using line drawing to explore self-awareness and how we relate to others. He is also assisting Rosa with business clients in other parts of Italy including a beauticians group and an outsourcing company. At the moment you will often find Giorgio listening to his Italian for Beginners tapes!

## Rubicon in Russia – & Kenya

Steve Briault writes:

In February I was invited to Moscow by Alexander Pavloutsky & Partners to run a 2-day seminar on "Process, Structure and Culture in the Developing Organisation" for about twenty Russian consultants, trainers and managers. Russian businesses, many undergoing privatisation, are facing huge challenges at present, in a society whose culture, values and habits have been thrown into turmoil. My challenge was to try to contribute something more appropriate, thought-provoking and imaginative than the uncritical transfer of Western practices which has been promoted by so many visitors to the former Soviet Union. The climate was cold, but the people correspondingly warm. The seminar seems to have been well received, and an interview which I gave has subsequently been published in a prominent Russian magazine for Personnel managers – a tiny pebble into a large whirlpool of social and economic forces...

Earlier, I had been in Nairobi at the

request of a new educational initiative which is striving to provide a holistic, integrated form of schooling for children from a cross-section of this highly diverse and divided nation. The idealism and commitment of the founding teachers and parents was truly inspiring, and it was a privilege to work with them to build a vision of the community they want to create, and help formulate a set of guiding principles for their work.

## Rubicon embraces e.marketing

Susan Bishop is one of eleven people in the UK who have completed their first half of the prestigious e.marketing award with the CIM (Chartered Institute of Marketing). E.marketing is the new opportunity, emerging from the latest technology: digital communications, online communications and multimedia marketing.

Susan is a specialist in marketing planning and the new e.marketing skills have helped in her role as integrated marketing consultant to the Brighton Media Centre (BMC) the key physical umbrella organisation in the area for over 45 small to medium new media, arts and communications companies. BMC provides an infrastructure and support services such as access to conference facilities, video conferencing, equipment and networking events.

The organisation offers an environment where like-minded individuals create synergy leading to partnership relationships.

The Brighton area is becoming the UK's own Silicon Valley and the Government see BMC as a model for satellite organisations and clusters across the South East.

## Management Development at Laiki Bank

Melvina Metochi,  
HR Manager at  
Laiki Bank,  
writes:



The Management Development Programme entitled "Genesis – Phase 1" at Laiki Bank (formerly Cyprus Popular Bank) is aimed at developing the management of the Bank to deal with significant challenges that will decide the future of the Bank in the UK. The importance of the ability to manage and lead our people through a series of changes was recognised, so that we could build firm foundations for the operation.

Emphasis was placed in building on managers' ability to:

- communicate well with each other;
- inspire and motivate staff;
- demonstrate best practice in managing improvement initiatives and offering high quality service to customers.

The Programme, developed and run by Steve Briault, involves both senior and middle management levels in the Bank. The idea is that successful strategy development and implementation requires the commitment of all those making decisions, not just top management. The sessions for the two groups are running in parallel, so that senior management can support middle management during this process of cultural and strategic change.

The Programme has definitely helped to establish a common language and understanding as a basis for moving the operation forward. Half way through, the concept of Open Space Technology was used for a joint session. This was an opportunity for dialogue and exchange of ideas, in an open forum, as part of the process of formulating the strategic goals for the UK operation. At the same time, participants in the Programme proposed and took on responsibility for a series of improvement projects to address urgent needs and requirements.

## Improving the public/private interface

**How do a high-profile Government agency and a multi-national business systems company manage and develop their relationship? In the context of a long-term contract, issues of performance and reward, risk-sharing, process improvement, profit and politics all arise. Contrasting cultures can cause misunderstanding and blame, often aggravated by false assumptions and stereotypes. It can be hard work to create and sustain real co-operation – but necessary and worthwhile work. In partnership with close associate Marjatta van Boeschoten of Phoenix Consultancy, Rubicon Director Steve Briault has been preparing and facilitating a series of relationship development workshops, supported by negotiation skills training, for the senior management teams of these two organisations. Very significant improvements in communication, joint planning and human relationships have been achieved, and a range of jointly identified priority areas are now being worked on by cross-boundary improvement teams, so that a "seamless" and reliable service can be consistently delivered to the public.**

## Rubicon offers: Specialist Consultancy Services

Lean Transformations  
Value Stream Development  
Interface Management  
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Coaching Networks  
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The Winning Contract  
Project management  
Career Transition

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is published by

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Hartfield, East Sussex TN7 4AR

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Designed and typeset by Roger Harmar

## Lean financial services

Over the past year we have been extending our work with Lean Thinking into the financial sector, with work in a large insurance company, a factoring house, and a social bank. Triodos Bank allows depositors to invest consciously in socially and environmentally beneficial enterprises, "for a decent profit", as they put it. Steve Briault guided a successful pilot in the Personal Banking section of the UK branch, as a result of which the Dutch-based Bank is now considering how best to extend the approach both within the UK operation and beyond.

# Lean Construction

Lean Construction is a phrase which has grown out of the government's Rethinking Construction initiative which was launched in July 1998 with a white paper which has come to be known as the "Egan Report" after its chairman Sir John Egan. Professor Dan Jones was a contributing member of that report and Brian Swain attended the launch in London. It was at this meeting that Brian realised that there was going to be an urgent need for a translation of all of that Rubicon Associates knew about Lean and its application in manufacturing, for the Construction Industry.

Since the Autumn of 1998 we have been working with a variety of companies, industry bodies and governmental organisations to define what Lean Construction actually means. This has not been a particularly easy task because at its heart Lean is a phenomenon and not a theory, which means that one needs to either find or demonstrate what Lean Construction is in the field and not as a theoretical proposition.

Jeff Martin and Brian Swain have led this effort, the result of which has been the creation and evolution of two Lean Construction workshops. Much of our early information in the application of Lean Thinking in Construction came

from our work with Hathaway Roofing. These workshops have now been run in the UK, Scotland and Northern Ireland in conjunction with the M4i (Movement for Innovation), the Construction Industry Training Board, the County Durham Business Link, the Kent Technology Centre, the Chartered Institute of Building, Willmot Dixon, and Mace. We have been busy.

This work continues and grows. Many new partners and opportunities are emerging.

All in all, Lean is making its way into the construction industry and Rubicon Associates are being able to play a part in this process.