

# INCLUSION IS A BETTER POLICY THAN EXCLUSION





## Inclusion is a better policy than exclusion

Following a post, I recently put on LinkedIn, I received a few emails (all very positive) referring to the point I made regarding designing top-down' and implementing bottom-up'. A number of these responses were prompting deeper analysis and seeking examples.

There is a plethora of examples, so I will only highlight several. However, before I do, those that know me, know that I am not going to regurgitate text-book stuff, albeit as an ITIL® trainer everything I promote is indeed based on ITIL principles, methodologies, and practices, etc., but hopefully, what people want to read is content that translates the textbook into real-life context and meaning.

Okay, let's start with one that is the most basic and fundamental (Culture): As a customer, I engaged once with a company who promoted that they deliver with a smile' and focus on customer experience' - (top-down, talking the walk!).

I don't think I ever saw anyone smile, and as for focusing on customer experience, the only experience I recall is when I had an issue, they seemed to take satisfaction in speaking down to me, intimating how stupid I must be! I am sure it was this moment when they did smile - (bottom-up, walking the talk!). In fact, it is interesting when you consider competing objectives; we have one here, as a customer, my 'moment of truth' was completely the opposite to this company's recognition of a 'moment of truth'.

(Measurement): I have worked in organisations who promoted strategic goals and objectives - (top-down, talking the walk!). However, I was never aware of a measurement framework to support this, and I was totally unaware how this cascaded to my team or me as an individual. In fact, life just carried on as it always did - (bottom-up, walking the talk!). Maybe, the senior leadership in these organisations were not sure how I should be measured, but if they asked me, I may have been able to propose suggestions, after all, I was hands-on with what I did.

(Policies): I have seen policies stipulating that items of significant expenditure require a business case to be submitted, outlining costs, risks, alternatives, benefits, and return on investment etc. (top-down, talking the walk!).

However, once approved, and following project implementation, I was never aware of how or who verified and evaluated whether the benefits and return on investment proposed were indeed achieved? – (bottom-up, walking the talk!). In fact, I cannot even recall if I was asked to provide such data/information.

I could go on, and on, but I won't, because I know many of you will resonate with these examples and more.

What I will say, is the underlying issue here is top-down (at the highest level) take-on far too much, meaning the scope of control is too wide at the top therefore, the scope of control becomes too narrow at the bottom, resulting in too much being pushed upwards.

We need to start trusting more, people at the most junior level are bubbling with great and innovative ideas, they are enthusiastic and forward thinking, and hold more tactical knowledge and experience than we realise, so inclusion is a better policy than exclusion!

Of course, we need to consider risk when assessing the scope of control, however we sometimes take this to the extreme. Of course, we must consider the consequences however, the reality is that some of these consequences are not that significant - let's not forget, in this fast moving, modern business world, the biggest risk is doing nothing!

So, let's look to how we can widen the scope of control below and start getting things done – walking the talk!

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