

"Knowledge is of no value unless you put it into practice."

-Anton Chekhov



Technology Oriented Realignment – in a creative way

In this column we mostly discuss 'changes' and adapting to changes. The pace at which the changes are taking place is unimaginable as the impacts of the changes are the only indication that changes are taking place. Technology is a major driver for this change. The change which we are creating—that we are not able to face or take—is the reality.

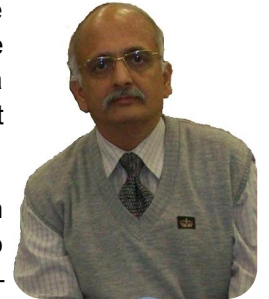
It is also understood now that the number of inventions during a period is an indicator of the speed of changes. There were centuries with just one or two inventions, today we have hundreds of them every day. Also today's world – particularly this part of the world where we live– is extremely well connected. So the pace at which the changes attack is great.

I find that several people are still either ignorant of these changes or have a very skeptical attitude towards these changes. They feel that the world is changing from bad to worse. Every generation has felt the same. Look at people who have the latest watches, latest cell phone, drink the latest liquor, have the latest model car, wear contemporary perfume but in their outlook they remain the same. They may not even be able to use computers properly. This is because in the case of all the other items, they need not take any effort, but to use a computer they need to. In a recent blog in the net, I read that several senior executives of organizations are still not computer savvy. I took the case of computers because it is easy to understand.

Surviving the changes is a 'mind' thing. People need to understand that if they do not overtake change, the change will overtake them. I remember that about two decades ago when the computerization of businesses was taking place, the accounting was the first area to be computerised but accountants were not prepared. Then the computerization took them over. Even now, there are many accountants who want to work around computer but not through it. Such people will get replaced very soon.

The focus now should be on 'realignment' - realignment to your core competencies, to technology. People tend to get away from competencies when they focus only on survival strategies. If we exist only for survival, then we can never develop core competencies. This process of "technology oriented realignment" (TOR) is what is being discussed across the globe today.

TOR has two faces to it, the individual and organizational. The individual decides the success of realignment. In an organization, democracy will prevail and hence unless more people want realignment, the organization will not realign. Power to trigger the change is not an issue. See what is happening in Egypt, Syria – democratic-people initiated realignment is taking place; as people with power did not opt for it. Now they have been opted out.



R S Murali

We need to be very creative during the TOR process. Traditional wisdom of clear cut goals, sound methodology, hard work and perseverance alone can result in success. It is stated that the base for innovation is knowledge and being creative would mean that the TOR has to be knowledge induced or knowledge driven.

Are we ready for TOR?

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Import Procedures



Deepak S

Introduction

Goods are imported in India through sea, air or land. Goods can come through post parcel or as baggage with passengers. Procedures naturally vary depending on mode of import or export. Procedures are discussed below are applicable for imports by sea, air or land, but not as baggage or postal dispatch

Procedures followed while importing

Import Procedures

Procedures have to be followed by 'person-in-charge of conveyance' as well as the importer.

Who is 'Person in Charge' - As per section 2(31) in The Customs Act, 1962, 'person in charge' means (a) In case of vessel - its master (b) In case of aircraft - its commander or pilot-in-charge (c) In case of train - its conductor or guard and (d) In case of vehicle or other conveyance - its driver or other person in charge.

The significance of this definition is –

- He is responsible for submitting Import Manifest and Export Manifest.
- He is responsible to ensure that the conveyance comes through approved route and lands at approved place only.
- He has to ensure that goods are unloaded after written order, at proper place. Loading also has to be only after permission.
- He has to ensure that conveyance does not leave without written order of customs authorities.
- He can be penalised for (a) Giving false declaration and statement (b) shortages or non-accounting of goods in conveyance.

Procedure to be followed by the Carrier - The 'person in charge of conveyance' (carrier of goods) has to follow prescribed procedure.

Arrival at customs port/airport only - Section 29 Customs Act, 1962 provides that person-in-charge of a vessel or an aircraft entering India shall call or land at customs port or customs airport *only*. It can land at other place only if compelled by accident, stress of weather or other unavoidable cause. In such case, he should report to nearest police station or Customs Officer. While arriving by land route, the vehicle should come by approved route to 'land customs station' only.

Import Manifest / Report- Person-in-charge of vessel, aircraft or vehicle has to submit Import Manifest / Report. [also termed as IGM - Import General Manifest]. (In case of a vessel or aircraft, it is called import manifest, while in case of vehicle, it is called import report.) The import manifest in case of vessel or aircraft is required to be submitted *prior* to arrival of a vessel or aircraft. Import report (in case of vehicle) has to be submitted within 12 hours of arrival at the customs station. If the report / manifest could not be submitted within prescribed time, person-in-charge or any person specified as responsible by a notification is liable to penalty up to Rs 50,000. Such penalty will not be imposed if the excise officer is satisfied that there was sufficient cause for the delay. [section 30(1)].

IGM can be submitted electronically where EDI facility is available.

Import Manifest is required to be submitted before of Aircraft or Vessel - Section 30(1) of Customs Act provides that Import Manifest should be filed before arrival of ship or aircraft. Normally, the Agents submit the Import Manifest before arrival, so that maximum possible formalities are completed before vessel or aircraft arrives. This also enables importers to file 'Bill of Entry' in advance.

Grant of Entry Inwards by Customs Officer - Unloading of cargo can start only after Customs Officer grant 'Entry Inwards'. Such entry inwards can be granted only when berthing accommodation is granted to a vessel. If there is heavy congestion at port, shipping berth may not be available and in such case, 'Entry Inwards' cannot be granted. This date is highly relevant for determining rate of customs duty applicable.

Carrier responsible for shortages during unloading - If the goods are short landed, the carrier is liable to pay penalty upto twice the amount of duty payable on such short landed goods.

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Procedure by Importer - The importer importing the goods has to follow prescribed procedures for import by ship/air/road (There is separate procedure for goods imported as a baggage or by post).

Bill of Entry - This is a very vital and important document which every importer has to submit under section 46. The Bill of Entry should be in prescribed form. The standard size of Bill of Entry is 16" × 13". However, for computerisation purposes, 15" × 12" size is permitted.

Bill of Entry should be submitted in quadruplicate – original and duplicate for customs, triplicate for the importer and fourth copy is meant for bank for making remittances.

Under EDI system, Bill of Entry is actually printed on computer in triplicate only after 'out of charge' order is given. Duplicate copy is given to importer.

Types of Bill of Entry - Bills of Entry should be of one of three types. Out of these, two types are for clearance from customs while third is for clearance from warehouse.

Bill of Entry for Home Consumption - This form, called 'Bill of Entry for Home Consumption', is used when the imported goods are to be cleared on payment of full duty. *Home consumption means use within India*. It is white coloured and hence often called 'white bill of entry'.

Bill of Entry for warehousing - If the imported goods are not required immediately, importer may like to store the goods in a warehouse without payment of duty under a bond and then clear from warehouse when required on payment of duty. This will enable him to defer payment of customs duty till goods are actually required by him. This Bill of Entry is printed on yellow paper and often called 'Yellow Bill of Entry'. It is also called 'Into Bond Bill of Entry' as bond is executed for transfer of goods in warehouse without payment of duty.

Bill of Entry for ex-bond clearance - The third type is for Ex-Bond clearance. This is used for clearance from the warehouse on payment of duty and is printed on green paper. The goods are classified and value is assessed at the time of clearance from customs port. Thus, value and classification is not required to be determined in this bill of entry. The columns in this bill of entry are similar to other bills of entry. However, declaration by importer is not required as the goods are already assessed.

Rate of duty for clearance from warehouse - It may be noted that rate of duty applicable is as prevalent on date of removal *from warehouse*. Thus, if rate has changed after goods are cleared from customs port, customs duty as assessed on yellow bill of entry and as paid on green bill of entry will not be same.

Mention of BIN on Bill of Entry – A BIN (Business Identification Number) is allotted to each importer and exporter w.e.f. 1.4.2001. It is a 15 digit code based on PAN of Income Tax (PAN is a 10 digit code).

Filing of Bill of Entry - Normally, Bill of Entry is filed by Customs House Agent (CHA) on behalf of the importer. Customs work at some ports has been computerised. In that case, the Bill of Entry has to be filed electronically, i.e. through Customs EDI system through computerisation of work. Procedure for the same has been prescribed vide Bill of Entry (Electronic Declaration) Regulations, 1995.

Documents to be submitted by Importer - Documents required by customs authorities are required to be submitted to enable them to (a) check the goods (b) decide value and classification of goods and (c) to ensure that the import is legally permitted. *The documents that are essentially required are* : (i) Invoice (ii) Packing List (iii) Bill of Lading / Delivery Order (iv) GATT declaration form duly filled in (v) Importers / CHAs declaration duly signed (vi) Import Licence or attested photocopy when clearance is under licence (vii) Letter of Credit / Bank Draft wherever necessary (viii) Insurance memo or insurance policy (ix) Industrial License if required (x) Certificate of country of origin, if preferential rate is claimed. (xi) Technical literature. (xii) Test report in case of chemicals (xiii) Advance License / DEPB in original, where applicable (xiv) Split up of value of spares, components and machinery (xv) No commission declaration. – A declaration in prescribed form about correctness of information should be submitted.

The Noting is now done electronically in large ports, while it is done manually in small ports. Thoka Number (Serial Number) is given while noting the Bill of Entry.

Electronic submission under EDI system – Where EDI system is implemented, formal submission of Bill of Entry is not required, as it is generated in computer system. Importer should submit declaration in electronic format to 'Service Centre'. A signed paper copy of declaration for non-reputability should be submitted. Bill of Entry number is generated by system which is endorsed on printed check list. Original documents are to be submitted only at the stage of examination.

Swarm Intelligence



Mamtha D A

What Is Swarm Intelligence?

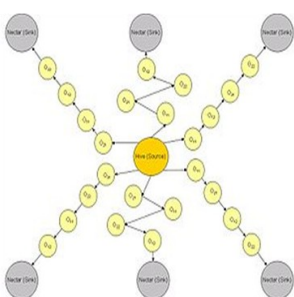
Social insects work without supervision. In fact, their teamwork is largely self-organized, and coordination arises from the different interactions among individuals in the colony. Although these interactions might be primitive (one ant merely following the trail left by another, for instance), taken together they result in efficient solutions to difficult problems (such as finding the shortest route to a food source among myriad possible paths). The collective behavior that emerges from a group of social insects has been dubbed "swarm intelligence."

Swarm Intelligence

Localized surges of phone traffic, require that messages be rerouted on the fly to less-congested parts of the network. Researchers from Hewlett-Packard's laboratories in Bristol, England, have developed a computer program based on ant-foraging principles that routes such calls efficiently. In the program, hordes of software agents roam through the telecom network and leave bits of information (think of them as "digital pheromone") to reinforce paths through uncongested areas. Phone calls then follow the trails left by the antlike agents. To fine-tune the software, the researchers have added a mechanism that continually evaporates the digital pheromone, enabling the program to adjust quickly to changes in traffic conditions. When a previously swift route becomes congested, agents that follow it are delayed, and the evaporation mechanism overcomes the reinforcement process. Soon that route is abandoned, and the agents discover (or rediscover) alternatives and exploit them. The benefits are twofold: when phone calls are rerouted through the better parts of a network, the process not only allows those calls to get through quickly but also enables the congested areas to recover from the overload. Thus the ant-based solution has the inherent advantages of swarm-intelligent systems: flexibility, robustness, and self-organization. France Telecom, British Telecom, and MCI WorldCom have taken an early lead in designing such ant-based routing methods. But the ultimate application might be on the Internet, where traffic is painfully unpredictable. Marco Dorigo of the University Libre de Bruxelles and his colleagues have adapted ant-based routing to handle Internet traffic. Simulation results indicate that their technique outperforms all existing routing methods, including the protocol that the Internet currently uses, in both maximizing throughput and minimizing delays.



As with other swarm intelligence applications, the Unilever program copes easily with changing conditions. When a piece of machinery breaks or demand for a particular product changes abruptly, for example, the software adjusts the schedules quickly and automatically. The Task of Dividing Tasks Foraging is not the only social-insect behavior rich with applications to business. The way insects allocate labor also holds valuable insights. In a honeybee colony, for instance, individuals specialize in certain tasks, and yet the allocation of work is very flexible. When food is scarce, for instance, nurse bees will help by foraging.



Bee colony model for job scheduling problems

Using honeybees as a model, a group worked with Michael Campos of Northwestern University to devise a system for scheduling paint booths in a truck factory. In the facility, the booths must paint trucks coming off an assembly line. When necessary, a booth can change the color it is using, but doing so is time-consuming and costly. So the booths can be thought of as honeybees governed by the following rule: an individual performs the tasks in which it is specialized unless it perceives an important need to perform another function. Thus, a booth with red paint will continue to handle orders of that color unless a job marked "urgent" requires a white truck and the queues at the other booths, particularly those specializing in white, are much longer. Although this rule sounds simplistic, in practice it is surprisingly effective. It has enabled the paint booths to determine their own workloads more efficiently (that is, with fewer color changes) than if a centralized computer had devised the schedules. And this self-organizing system has the benefits of other swarm-intelligent approaches: flexibility and robustness. When the number of trucks that need to be painted blue surges unexpectedly, for eg., other booths quickly forgo their specialty colors to accommodate the unassigned vehicles, or when a paint booth breaks down, the remaining stations compensate by immediately divvying up the additional load. Another useful model of work allocation comes from seed-harvester ants carrying food back to their nest. Like runners transferring a baton in a relay race, the ants pass food down a chain.

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"What we think determines what happens to us, so if we want to change our lives, we need to stretch our minds."

Wayne Dyer

But the ants are not stationary, and their transfer points are not fixed: an ant carries the food down the chain until it reaches the next ant, and after transferring the food, it turns back until it meets the previous ant in the chain to receive its next load. The only fixed locations in this operation are the start (the food source) and the end (the nest).

This simple approach, known as the "**bucket brigade**" can dramatically increase the efficiency of operations in which work is passed from one person to another. John Bartholdi of Georgia Tech and Donald Eisenstein of the University of Chicago have applied it to order pickers at a large distribution center of a major retail chain. Initially, the warehouse used a zone approach, in which each worker was responsible for a particular part of the order, and the next person couldn't begin until the first person completed that task. (Say, for example, in filling an order for books, one person might be responsible for putting in the biology books first, and then another would put in the business books.) One problem with zone approaches is the wide variation in the rates at which different employees work—the quickest person could be four times as fast as the slowest. So zone approaches tend to underuse the faster people and aggravate the slower ones, who are constantly under pressure to keep up. And even if everyone worked at the same speed, fluctuations in customer demand would still make it difficult to demarcate the different zones of responsibility to balance the amount of work. At the distribution center studied, a supervisor had to monitor each aisle to correct the congestions that inevitably occurred. Bartholdi and Eisenstein implemented the following rule for each worker: "Continue picking out products to fill the order until the person downstream from you takes over your work; then head upstream to take over the next person's work." The researchers also looked at other ways.

The Advantages of Swarm Intelligence

- Flexibility: *the group can quickly adapt to a changing environment.*
- Robustness: *even when one or more individuals fail, the group can still perform its tasks.*
- Self-organization: *the group needs relatively little supervision or top-down control.*

A Swarm of possibilities

The possible applications of swarm intelligence may be limited only by the imagination. The way insects cluster their colony's dead and sort their larvae, for instance, has led to a novel approach for banks to use to analyze their data for interesting commonalities among customers. A research group is developing reconfigurable robot swarms that can assemble themselves into vacuum cleaners and other home appliances. And future studies of social insects will likely yield additional provocative insights. For instance, when a honeybee colony becomes too large -the nest splits into two; exactly what rules bees follow to do these remains a mystery. Such knowledge could help large corporations determine when to spin off some of their operations.

Another intriguing phenomenon occurs when a queen wasp, fearing that the departure of some of her subordinates could cripple the colony, induces them to stay by granting them the right to lay eggs. This amounts to "staying incentive" depending on ecological conditions. If, say, the weather is mild and food abundant, the queen must offer greater inducements. A parallel can be drawn to managers trying to retain top talent in a booming economy. Such fascinating comparisons aside, the field of swarm intelligence faces several obstacles. Many people have great difficulty understanding how swarm intelligence can work, mainly because they are unfamiliar with self organizing systems. Furthermore, group behavior that emerges-as if by magic-from the collective interactions of individuals can be a frightening concept for those unaccustomed to it. Indeed, we have often found it difficult to convince managers to deploy swarm-intelligent solutions even after much education and hard data that quantify the benefits. Lastly, critics often object that insects and people cannot-and should not-be described with the same mathematical frameworks. But we would argue that in certain environments (a factory, for instance), humans are constrained in similar ways-although perhaps to a different degree-as insects are in a colony. And the parallels between social insects and people are more than just conceptual: they can have practical and useful significance, as recent research has shown. Indeed, swarm intelligence is becoming a valuable tool for optimizing the operations of various businesses. Whether similar gains will be made in helping companies better organize themselves and develop more effective strategies remains to be seen. At the very least, although the field provides a fresh new framework for solving such problems, it questions the wisdom of certain assumptions regarding the need for employee supervision through command-and-control management. In the future, some companies could build their entire businesses from the ground up using the principles of swarm intelligence, integrating the approach throughout their operations, organization, and strategy. The result: An ultimate self-organizing enterprise that could adapt quickly-and instinctively -to fast-changing markets.

Words Confused and Misused (28)

Said-This:

As a participial adjective meaning aforesaid or before-mentioned *said* is established in legal usage but is not considered correct in general composition. The said act was committed by the said person on the said day. This act was committed by him on 20th October.

Sample- example:

Sample is often used when example, specimen, or instance would be better. A sample is strictly a part of a thing itself, designed to show the quality of the whole. The other words refer to typical or illustrative cases. We may have a sample of cloth, wood, or painting, and an example of honesty, studiousness, or perseverance.

Script- scrip:

“Stockholders of this company are paid in script.” This represents a frequent misuse of script for scrip. Script is a style of type that imitates handwriting. An original document is legally called a script. Scrip is a certificate that entitles the holder to receive something, often in the form of a promise to pay later. Such certificates taken collectively are also called scrip.

Seasonal- seasonable:

Seasonal is often misused for seasonable, as “your compliment was not very seasonal.” Seasonal has the more limited meaning. It applies to a season or the seasons in a literal sense, as “overcoats are seasonal goods.” Seasonable has a broader meaning and may be used in the sense of suitable or timely. “His visit was seasonable and he discussed seasonable subjects.”

Self- I

Self is correct as a prefix in various technical words but is not correct as a general substitute for half. We walk half a mile, eat half a meal, and pay half a crown, not semi.

to be contd

Excel Tips

Right

What Does It Do ?

This function displays a specified number of characters from the right hand side of a piece of text.

Syntax

=right(text,[num_chars])

Example

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Original Text	Number of Characters Required	Right String		
2	Alan Jones	1	s	=RIGHT(A2,B2)	
3	Alan Jones	2	es	=RIGHT(A3,B3)	
4	Cardiff	6	ardiff	=RIGHT(A4,B4)	
5					

Left

What Does It Do ?

This function displays a specified number of characters from the left hand side of a piece of text.

Syntax

=left(text,[num_chars])

Example

	A	B	C	D
1	Text	Number of Characters Required	Left String	
2	Alan Jones	1	A	=LEFT(A2,B2)
3	Alan Jones	3	Ala	=LEFT(A3,B3)
4	Cardiff	6	Cardif	=LEFT(A4,B4)
5				

to be contd

A Zen Story - Wanting God



A hermit was meditating by a river when a young man interrupted him. "Master, I wish to become your disciple," said the man. "Why?" replied the hermit. The young man thought for a moment. "Because I want to find God."

The master jumped up, grabbed him by the scruff of his neck, dragged him into the river, and plunged his head under water. After holding him there for a minute, with him kicking and struggling to free himself, the master finally pulled him up out of the river. The young man coughed up water and gasped to get his breath. When he eventually quieted down, the master spoke. "Tell me, what did you want most of all when you were under water."

"Air!" answered the man.

"Very well," said the master. "Go home and come back to me when you want God as much as you just wanted air."



Corporate Social Responsibility at NCRCL: Mohanty, Ashok, Mamtha, Babu and Mahesh served as volunteers for a Civic Fest for school children organized by Bala Janaagraha on the 12th of February. The team was in-charge of hospitality which included packing and distributing food packets to about 700 children and their teachers.

Our website ncrcl.com has a new look. The salient features of the website include our mission statement, our values and Blog. This new website enables content management and hence updation will be frequent. This was developed by Deepak Ramesh with inputs from the entire NCRCL team! Your feedback and articles for the blog are welcome.

Last month updates on myncrcl.com

1. Vision Logo & Poster (see myncrcl.com>>the mission & vision)
2. Five Human Values (see myncrcl.com>>the five values)
3. Employee details of Suresh S. Meti (see myncrcl.com>>employees>>employee details>>bangalore)
4. Study Circle documents uploaded (see myncrcl.com>>support>>ncrcl knowledge base>>Internal sessions)

For regular updates, see 'Announcements' page under myncrcl.com



Suresh S. Meti joins NCRCL as Project Trainee. We extend a very warm welcome to Suresh.

Know Your Colleagues



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 Date of Birth: 2nd February
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No	Questions	Your Answers
1.	The meaning of your name.	Lord Shiva.
2.	Nick name.	
3.	Your dream job.	Present job and to be a Hardware & Network Engineer.
4.	Your first impression of NCRCL® .	Lots of learning.
5.	What personal/emotional characteristic of yours do you want to change?	Fear of communication.
6.	Money or job satisfaction?	Both.
7.	Your stress buster.	Praying.
8.	Do you have a small circle of close friends, rather than a large number of friends?	Small circle of close friends.
9.	What do you most like about a person?	Friendly nature.
10.	What do you most hate in a person?	Ego.
11.	Team work Vs Individual work – your comments.	Team work.
12.	Do you make efforts to get others to laugh and smile?	Always.
13.	Your heart rules your head or your head rules your heart?	Both..
14.	Special talent.	Playing cricket, carrom.
15.	Hobbies.	Watching sports, travel.

Knowledge Snippet



Who is the author of the book "The Audacity of Hope"

Send in your answers to the editor at bangalore@ncrcl.com

ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S KNOWLEDGE SNIPPET QUESTION:

What is special about the following sequence of numbers?

8,5,4,9,1,7,6,10,3,2,0

ANSWER: The sequence of numbers when spelt in words are in alphabetical order.



The right answer was given by Ashok Rao & Subba Rao

!!! Congratulations !!!

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Go Green!

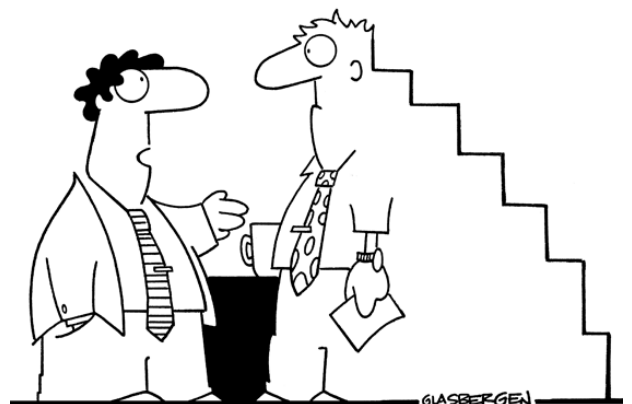
Don't let the water run while you brush: Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth. You'll conserve up to five gallons of water per day -- which could add up to 1.5 billion gallons that could be saved across the country each day

Go Green

Just for Laughs!



"We have a VP of Records Management, but we don't know who it is because nobody can locate the file."



"You'd probably get more work done if you didn't let everyone walk all over you!"