Manage by Designing: Approaches for Everyday Innovation

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The "Principles of Design," a powerful skill-set for **flexible thinking and innovation**, is based on groundbreaking research by Dr. Fred Collopy and his colleagues in the Weatherhead School of Management's Department of Information Systems.

Every day, Managers (and Leaders; collectively, "Leaders") have opportunities to improve organizations by creating and remaking strategies, processes, structures, products, services. Often their plans and decisions determine success or failure of their organizations.

To excel at strategy and "organization improvement," leaders need to expand their roles as analysts and decision-makers to **become competent as <u>Designers</u>**.

Leaders are already deeply engaged in "designing" as part of their everyday work, yet we give relatively little attention to **developing Design skills**. When leaders study Design they learn to

- reframe problems
- sketch and prototype ideas
- apply the logic of possibilities to see through/beyond default situations.

Managing by Design builds on current success, helping Leaders contribute to their organizations at a new level through Design Thinking, Design Skills, and Design Experiences.

Managing by Design's key characteristics:
- Design attitude contrasts with "Decision" attitude
- Design values practicality, ingenuity, empathy, and appropriateness
- Differs from both art and science
- Aids in developing specific Design Thinking skills.

Design Thinking Skills:
- Reframe problems to make them solvable
- Use sketching to help others see their ideas clearly
- Maintain multiple models of complex ideas
- Avoid attachment, rigid processes, and other traps to solving ill-structured problems
- Structure design situations to take advantage of opportunities.

Design Attitude and Thinking builds the capacity for Leaders and all employees to:
- Understand problems through the lens of design
- Learn to apply design models to get started on ill-structured problems
- Practice reframing problems
- Avoid common pitfalls that limit creative solutions
- Learn to balance competing tensions in a design problem