

EXECUTIVE SYSTEMS THINKING TRAINING SEMINAR 3 March 2015

Robert Steele

Systainability Asia / AtKisson Group

Premise of this Seminar

1. A systems perspective helps us to understand what shapes the way society thinks and acts.

2. By using a systems approach, we can better understand what lies underneath various social issues in order to develop long-term solutions.

Seminar Objectives

1. Introduce systems thinking as an effective problem analysis and solution approach.
2. Share some practical systems thinking tools, methods, and techniques.

Robert Steel – Systainability Asia - Part of A global network dedicated to sustainability strategy learning, and inspiration



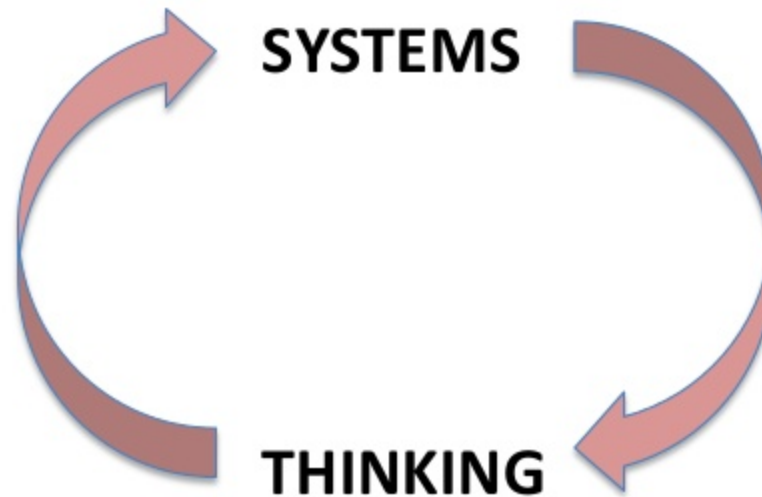
Current And Past Clients Include:

Levi Strauss & Co. • Ernst & Young • Nike • Baltic 21 (the 11 nations of Northern Europe) • European Sustainable Development Network • Brother, Inc. (Japan) • Earth Charter International • Swedish SIDA's Advanced International Training Programs • United Nations Division for Sustainable Development Egyptian National Competitiveness Council • Government of Singapore • Greater New Orleans, Inc. • SEIYU (Japan) • SERDP - Strategic Environmental Research & Development Program (US Government) • Seliger Forum 2010 (Russia) • Sustainable Fashion Academy • States of Queensland, Victoria, NSW, and South Australia • Stockholm County • Sustainable Seattle • Heinz Endowments • Toyota • UNEP • UNDP • Nile Basin Initiative • Bank of Indonesia • Volvo Cars

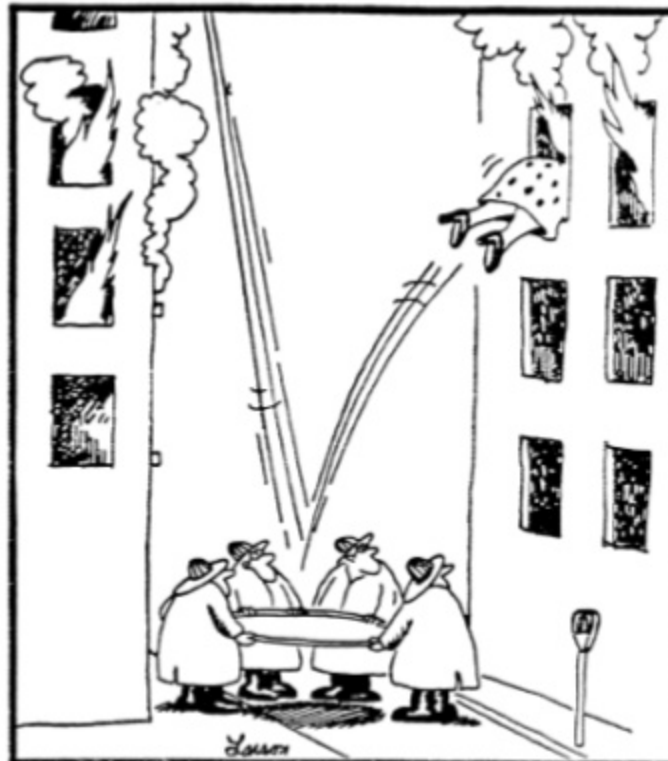
A little Thumb wrestling



Part 1 - What is Systems Thinking?



Important idea: “Good people can make bad or harmful decisions if the systems within which they are making those decisions are poorly designed.



Artist:
Gary Larson

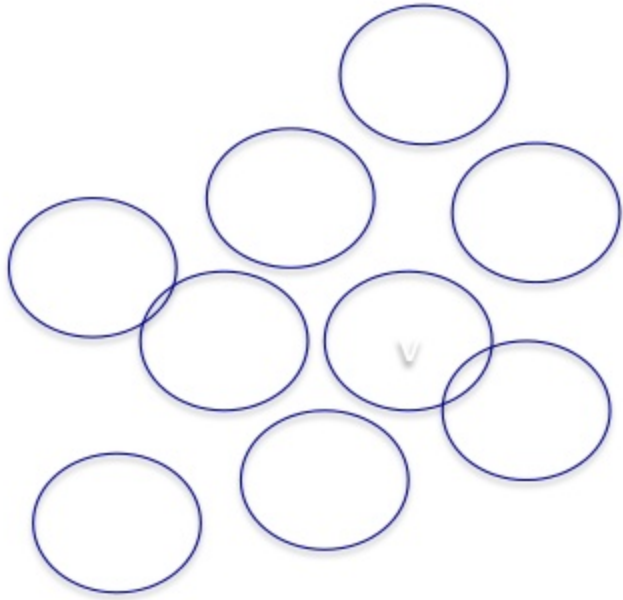
What Is A System?

A system is a set of elements whose interconnections determine their behavior.

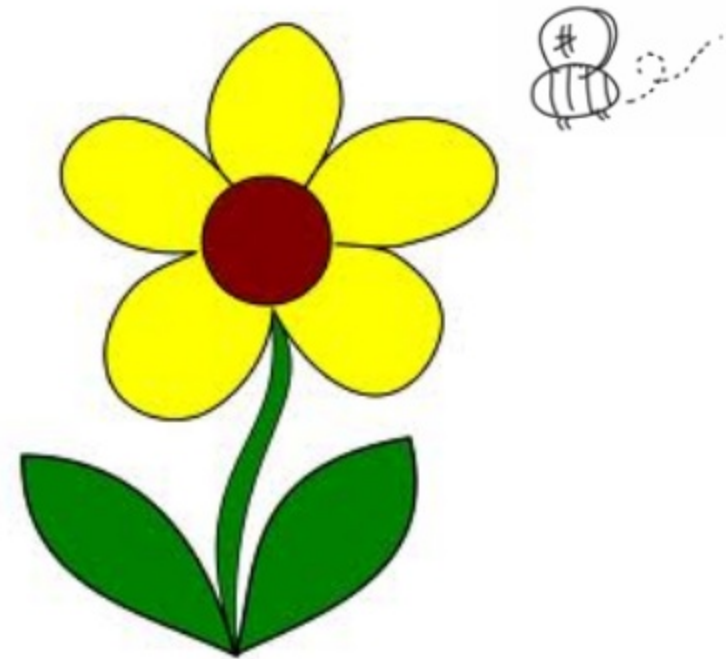
Systems are bound together by the laws of cause and effect, and governed by flows of information, energy and materials.

Note: *People give definition to systems based on an idea of what should happen at a given point in time. Thus, systems have a purpose.*

Not a System



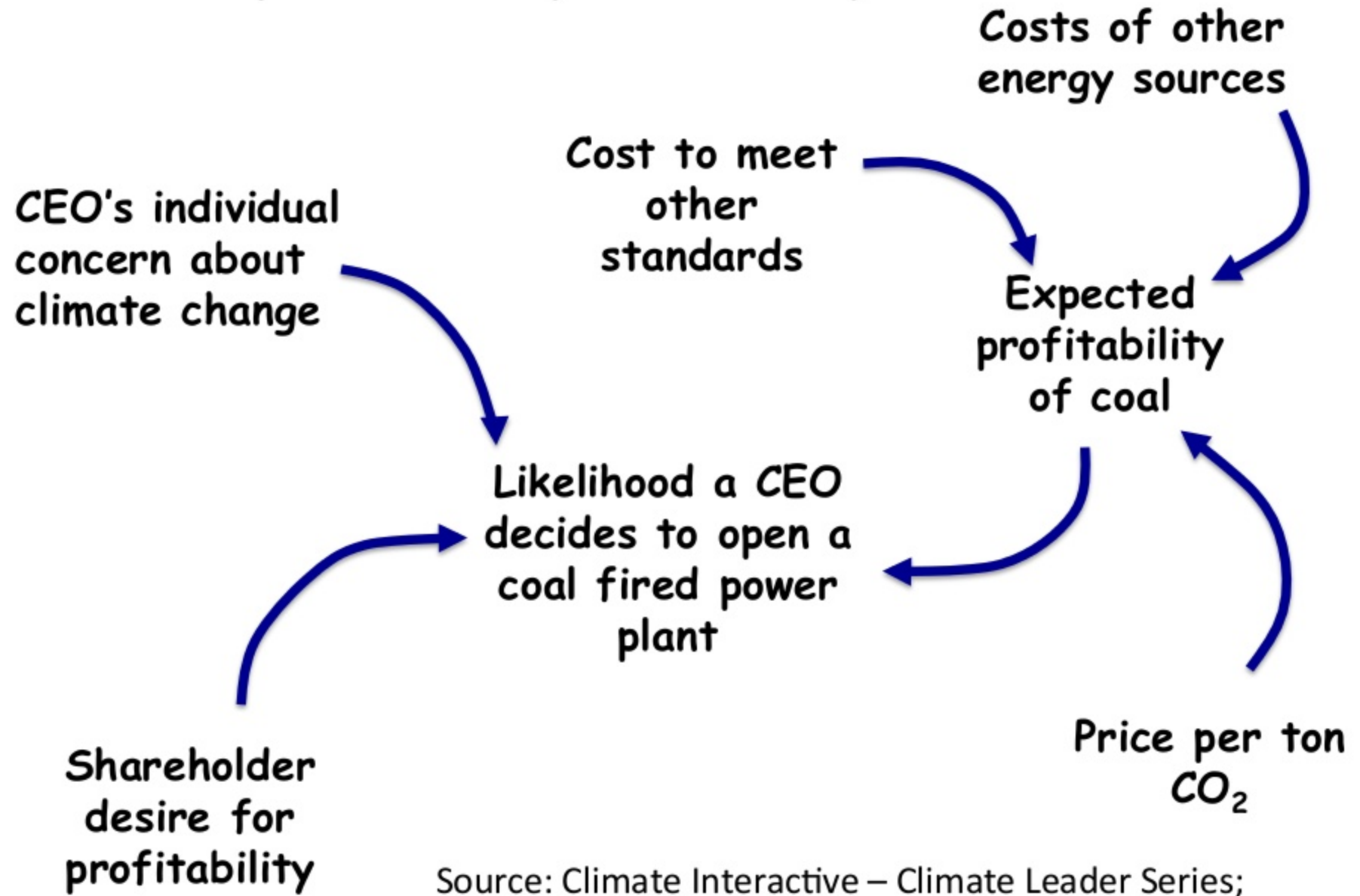
A System



Bigger more Complex Systems



An example of system dynamics...



Source: Climate Interactive – Climate Leader Series;
<http://thecclimateleader.org>

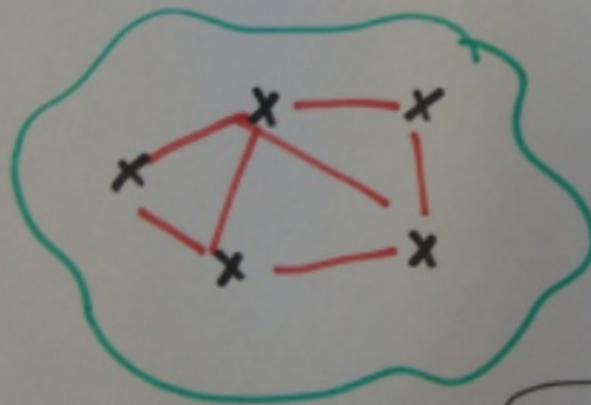
**Would a new decision maker
placed in the same system
make a different decision?**

STEP 6:

Some Insights

CHANGE THE SYSTEM!

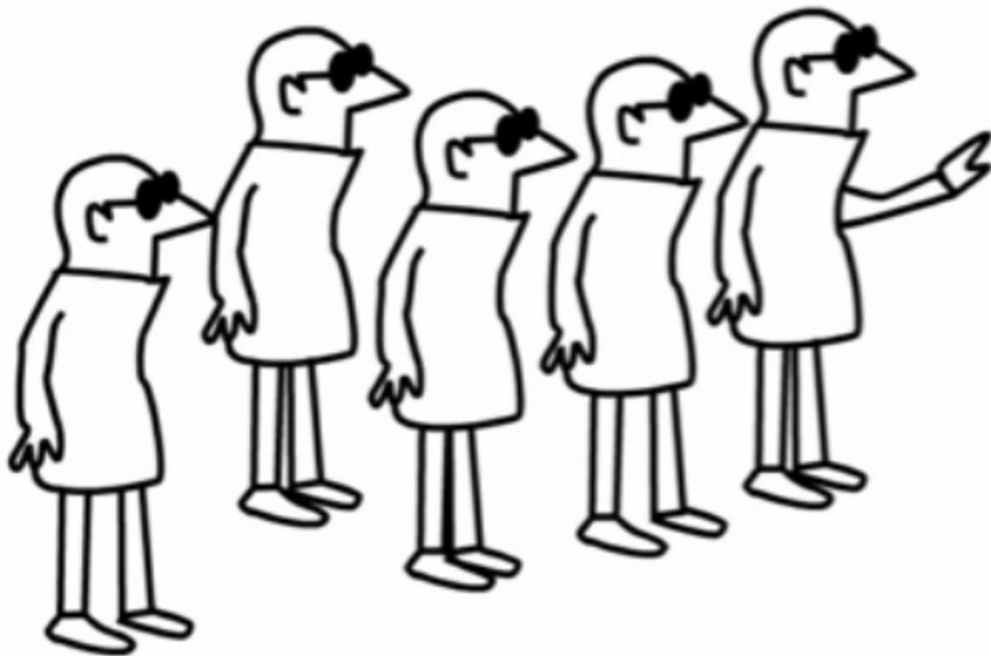
OLD HABITS
DIE HARD

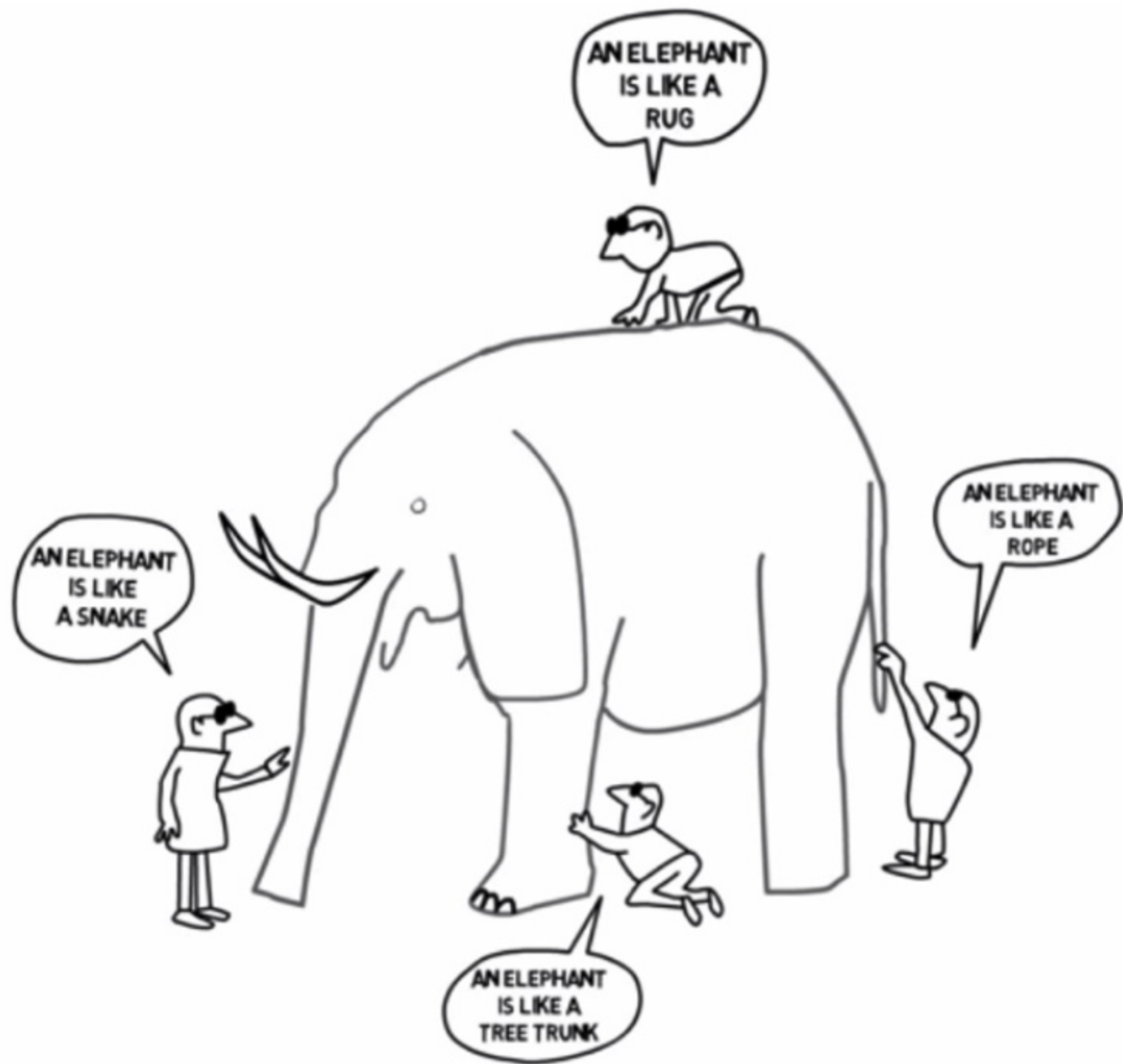


LACK OF INDIVIDUAL
RESPONSIBILITY

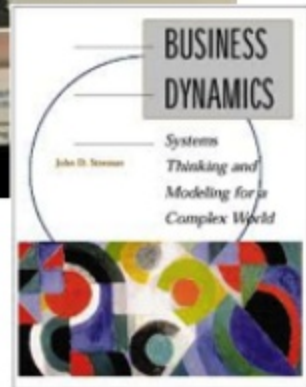
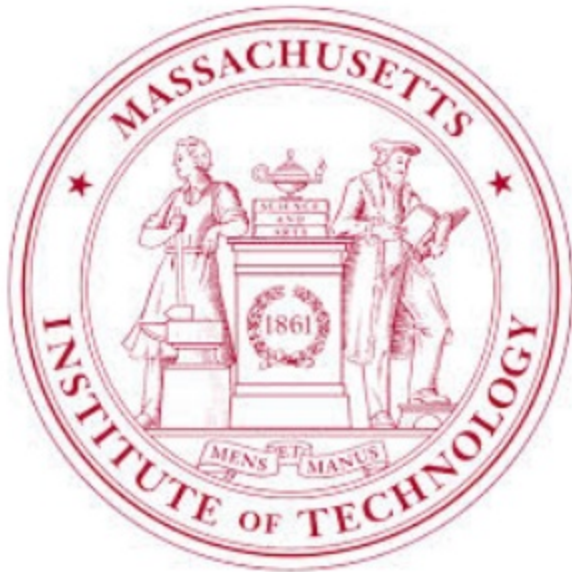
UNWILLING TO
LISTEN + LEARN

A Systems Perspective

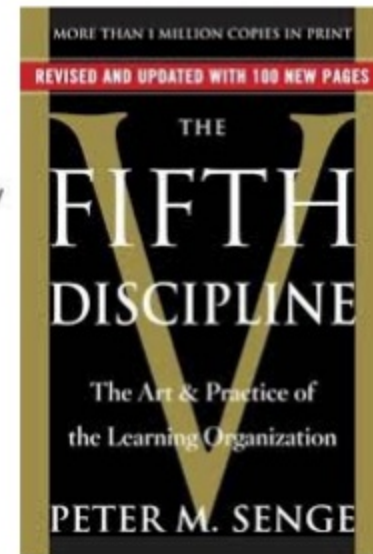




A little background on System Thinking

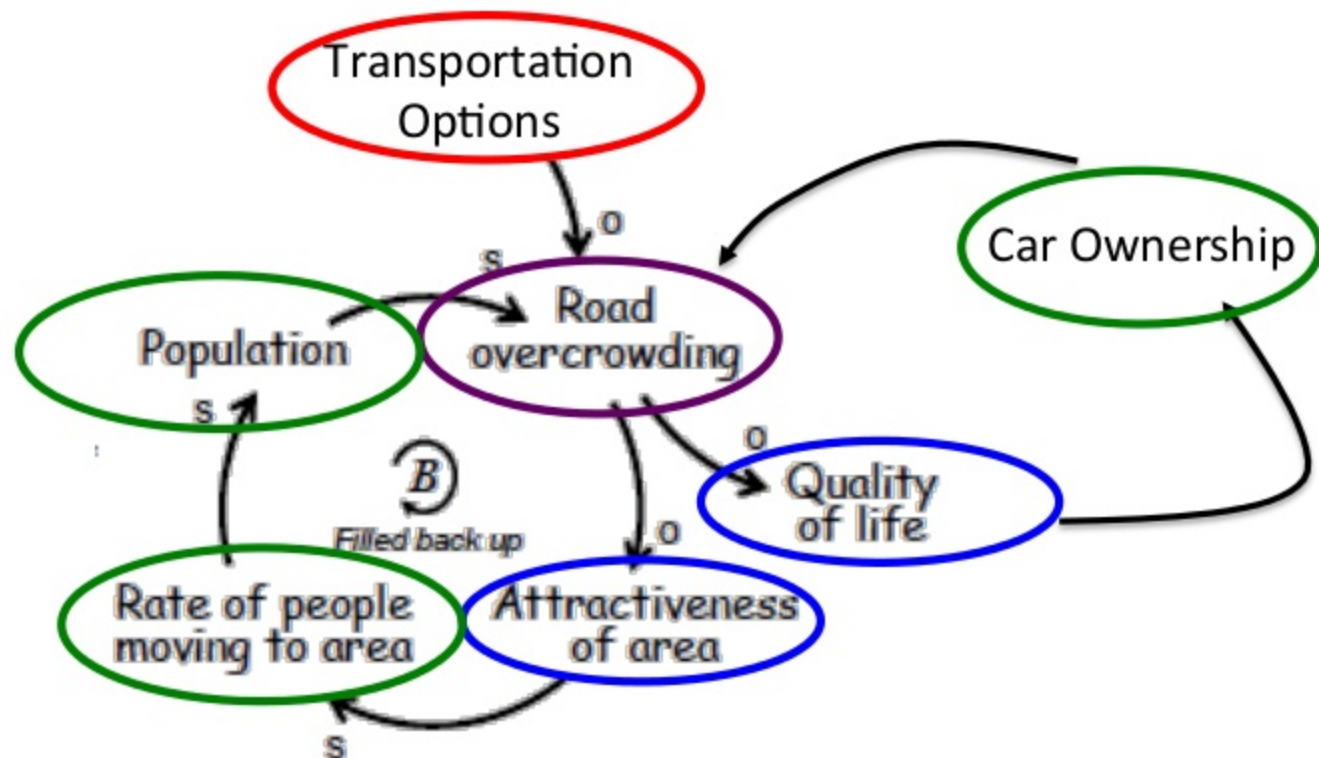


Peter Senge
Senior Lecturer,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Systems Thinking helps us to . . .

. . . move the focus away from **events** and **patterns of behavior** (which are symptoms of problems) and toward **systemic structure** and the underlying **mental models**



Adapted from: Senge, Peter, The Fifth Discipline, 1996.

Systems Thinking has a Special Language

- Source
- Stock
- Flows
- Sinks
- Feedback
- Reinforcing
- Balancing
- Leverage Point