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### **Corporate Intranets and Knowledge Management: A Quest for Efficiency or Taylorism Revisited?**

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## ***Abstract***

During America's industrial age, Frederick W. Taylor, the father of scientific management, sought to maximize his factories' efficiency by maximizing the efficiency of his workers. Taylor's critics argued that his desire to maximize his workers' efficiency encouraged him to view his workers as inhuman objects. Today, intranets are becoming increasingly important to companies as they search for more efficient ways to share information. An important correlation can be drawn between how we seek to efficiently produce information and how Taylor sought to efficiently produce products. As intranets improve the efficiency of employees, will they also encourage managers to view their employees as inhuman objects? This paper seeks to explore this possibility by examining intranets—what they are, their benefits and drawbacks. This paper concludes that when employing intranets, managers must be careful that the intranets have both the company's and employees' best interest in mind.

Susan Cuthill, director of International Human Resources Consulting Services for Arthur Andersen in Chicago was faced with a dilemma. Near closing time, she received an urgent request from a client. As she pondered her options of how to handle this request, she wondered if this would mean another late night at the office to keep her client happy.

Rather than lose a good night's sleep, Cuthill e-mailed colleagues in the U.K. office asking them to work on the assignment and to send the information back to her. When she woke up the next morning, she, with the help of the U.K. office, had an answer for her client. "When I walked in, [the U.K. office's response] was in my e-mail. I had the fax on the client's desk by 9:00 a.m. Amazing," Cuthill said. (Solomon 1998) With new technologies, businesses can work for their clients 24 hours a day without having to work overtime if they are connected by a global corporate intranet.

It seems that everyone is talking about corporate intranets and how they contribute to companies being more efficient and how intranets facilitate spreading knowledge throughout companies. (Gottschalk & Khandelwal 2004) But what exactly is an intranet, and what are their implications? This article will explore the following questions: How are intranets affecting employees? Is this new form of intra-company communication simply digitizing workers? Is the electronic medium contributing to a new form of dehumanizing Taylorism? The process of helping workers to perform in the most efficient manner possible is the underlying reasoning behind Taylorism and intranets; both can have dehumanizing effects on workers if not properly managed.

## **Taylorism**

The age-old dilemma continues of how to get employees to work more efficiently to generate greater profits for their employers. In the 18th Century, Adam Smith showed that by breaking up production systems into individual units, workers on an assembly line could make more products daily than if each worker worked to produce an entire product alone. Smith also taught the importance of making machines to take tools out of workers' hands.

The continued interaction of humans with machines led managers and their engineers to analyze the way people interacted with machines. Frederick W. Taylor, the father of scientific management, believed the principal objective of management should be to secure the maximum prosperity for both the employer and employee by using a minimal amount of human effort and natural resources at the lowest cost of capital.

Taylor described a prosperous organization as one operating every aspect of its business at its highest form of excellence. Taylor thought employees should be developed to work at their maximum efficiency level. Accordingly, this prosperity meant the employees should receive higher wages than other workers in similar jobs at different companies. To bring this prosperity, Taylor felt managers played a crucial role in providing the information workers needed to work in the most efficient manner. (Taylor 1913)

On the other hand, Herbert Simon argued that Taylor's ideas, or Taylorism, dehumanized workers. Simon believed through Taylorism, employees would be viewed as passive instruments--easily manipulated by management and turned on by monetary rewards. In Simon's view, Taylor's dehumanization of workers had one sole purpose--to make his workers operate as efficiently as machines. (Waring 1991)<sup>1</sup> Other critics

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen R. Waring, *Taylorism Transformed: Scientific Management Theory Since 1945* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991) 52.

argued that Taylor saw workers as little more than an ingenious and necessary device that happened to be governed by laws of psychology rather than physics." (Commons 1913)

In the nine decades since Taylor's reign as the king of efficiency, the United States' economy has undergone massive changes. During Taylor's time, at the turn of the 20th century, the United States was at the height of the industrial era and all eyes were focused on how to produce more efficiently. Today, as we prepare to enter the 21st century, our eyes are focused on information. In 1991, the United States spent more money on information technology than it spent on production technology for the first time. (Stewart 1997) With this shift of focus from production to information, many managers are tapping into the greatest asset they possess--the knowledge of their employees.

Until recently, management lacked a way of taking the information from the heads of their employees and transferring it into knowledge for everyone in the organization. The latest trend in internal communication networks is for companies to be better connected and better informed throughout the whole organization. With this new ability, employees can post their knowledge on the company's intranet, making this information accessible to all employees within the firm. The next section will describe in more detail what an intranet is and how it works.

## ***Intranets***

Companies have been connected by groupware and internal networks for over a decade, but the term *intranet* is only a few years old. Steven L. Telleen coined this term for internal networks or "private internets" formatted like the Internet. Intranets use Internet Protocol (IP) behind a firewall protecting this private network from external penetration. Intranets do not distinguish between computer types, thus allowing easy cross-departmental connectedness. An employee using a standard web browser can access company information from his or her own desktop.

As with all new projects, managers must justify the development of a new project by showing how the company's bottom line will be affected. Many companies are raving about the savings they are realizing with the reduction of printing costs for their internal communications. These companies also say they have seen significant reductions in their telephone bills. For example, companies that place their human resource information on-line allow their employees to find answers to most of their standard questions on the intranet without having to call the human resource department. This frees up the human resource workers to deal with only the most difficult situations. Once employees use the company's intranet to answer their basic questions, individual departments and businesses as a whole, can realize great savings. Monetary savings are fairly easy to measure but they are not the only way in which intranets are benefiting corporations.

## ***Benefits of Intranets***

Intranets are being used in a variety of ways within businesses to benefit the organization's internal and external communications. Lucy Marshall, an expert on intranets, says intranets are putting knowledge management theory into practice: "By application of networked technologies and widespread digitization of information, corporations now have the opportunity to use all of the information in an organization to

create knowledge and make informed, rational business decisions." (Marshall 1997)

### **Increased Availability and Selectivity of Information**

Critics of intranets argue that employees now have too much information available to them--sometimes referred to as *information overload*. Mike Elgan counters the argument by saying it isn't too much information that causes overload; information overload occurs when individuals have no control over what information comes to them. (Elgan 1996) Intranets are ideal for allowing individuals to decide what information they want to look at. If the information is difficult to access or they don't know where to find it, then the intranet is inefficient for sharing information. Managers can play a key role in directing employees to information on the intranet that may facilitate the completion of a worker's own project. Mike Kremer, manager of MCI Communications' Object Technology Group, said that being able to monitor employees in this way is "very helpful, especially where we're so spread out across the country. We save a lot of time and money just by putting people in touch with one another." (Gaudin 1997)

Many companies provide full texts on-line that will help workers in their jobs. Other companies place Internet links on their intranet home page to businesses and information sources the workers may find helpful. Policy books and manuals can easily be accessed on-line as well as detailed listings of what others have done within the company on their own projects. In this way, anyone in the organization can discover information that is pertinent to his or her own job. Marc Rosenberg, AT&T district manager of strategic learning technologies said, "[Intranets] may be the first real technology that encourages true organizational learning. It opens up a business and creates a knowledge sharing, rather than a knowledge hoarding, culture." (Cohen 1998)

### **Lower Costs**

Company manuals, newsletters, and other sources of information are being posted on intranets and are saving firms thousands of dollars in printing costs. Owens Corning, for example, has eliminated 50 percent of its copiers, 50 percent of its printers, and 60 percent of its fax machines. All internal communications are done through its intranet. Owens Corning expected to save \$50 million in its intranet's first year of operation. Thirty million dollars were saved on office space alone by eliminating all file cabinets. (King 1997) Sapient Corp. reports its intranet saves employees an average of 20 minutes per day--a 1,000 percent return on its investment. (Engler 1997)

### **Efficient New Employee Training**

Companies can easily train new hires on the common practices and procedures of the company by simply telling them where to access the information on the intranet. New employees have access to what others in the company have been doing and can quickly learn what is expected of them. This gives new hires more than just one mentor--in fact it provides a whole company of mentors. Intranets can also help to alleviate the initial loss in productivity often experienced while a newcomer is becoming familiar with the new company and job. Newcomers can post special knowledge they have on the company's intranet and immediately begin contributing positively to the company's bottom line.

### **Improved Consistency**

Consumers have come to expect consistency in the production of a particular good. For instance, a Coca-Cola produced in New York should taste the same as a Coca-Cola produced in San Diego. We expect the same level of consistency within businesses dealing with information. Whether we're talking with a consulting firm's London office or Seattle office, we expect the same high-quality information. Regardless of who the consultant is, we expect him or her to have access to the same information that his or her co-workers have. Intranets allow for information-based businesses to provide the

same information and service to each client from each office. They also allow for easier facilitation of company-wide quality campaigns.

### **Better Service to Client**

One of the main benefits of intranets is the increased service that organizations can provide to their customers. Large consulting firms identified the dissemination and availability of knowledge as the key factor of their competitive advantage. The main reason dissemination and availability of knowledge provides this advantage is these companies can service their clients better, whether by quickly beginning a new project on a pre-defined template from their network or by quickly learning about new technologies or management processes to better serve their client. (Coleman 1997)

Omar Wasow, president of New York Online, developed a system of creating a client folder on his web server where he records everything he does for his client including correspondence, proposals, contracts, and so on. At the end of the project, he easily compiles a thorough report for his client. Also, staff meetings are almost non-existent in his organization with his new intranet-based system. (Reeves 1996)

Even the automobile industry has jumped on the intranet bandwagon to improve customer service. Saab, for instance, allows dealers to browse through information at its main headquarters to find out about parts shipment, warranties, sales, and finance information. Saab reports this system has increased dealer productivity while decreasing costs. (Vijayan 1998)<sup>2</sup>

### **Increased Connectivity**

Intranets are helping businesses that have more than one office and helping traveling employees to stay connected. Dick Saboda, a senior engineer at Galaxy Scientific Corp. spends half the month traveling. Before Galaxy installed an intranet, he had to wait until he returned to the office to do time sheets and expense reports. Now, he finishes his reports in his hotel room before returning to the office. His feelings about this system, "That's double productivity!" His company saves \$3,000 to \$4,000 a month on long distance phone calls since eliminating its dial-up data exchange system and replacing it with an integrated financial system connected through an intranet.

Connectivity is doing more than simply improving organizations at the individual employee level. Intranets are allowing workers to collaborate and share best practices with one another and to work side-by-side on projects, from different continents. Intranets allow more flexibility within an organization as workers organize around information, not around hierarchical schemes.

### **Greater Collaboration**

A greater degree of knowledge sharing within an organization can be facilitated by capturing workers' knowledge and disseminating it through an intranet. Simplex, a manufacturer of fire-arms, security, building communications, and workforce management products, had 1,600 field representatives servicing customers. The home office had 15 employees in a call-center support office answering the field representatives' calls. The call center was extremely inefficient for the representatives, requiring a 45 minute wait before they could talk to a technical support person. Half of the time the support person didn't have an answer for the representatives. Richard Strader, a technical support employee for Simplex outlined some of the key problems surrounding his office's inefficiencies. He said with each call the support person received, he or she had to rely on his or her own memory, notes, or conversations with other support people. Strader said, "We were rediscovering solutions on a case-by-case basis." Simplex is improving customer service with SolutionBuilder, an intranet-linked database containing common problems that field representatives encounter and

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<sup>2</sup>Jaikumar Vijayan, "Server Readies Saab Data for Web" *Computerworld*, 13 July 1998, 41-42.

possible solutions to these problems. Field representatives' waiting time has decreased to 6.4 minutes and 78 percent of their questions are answered with the first phone call. Its like having all the call-center employees helping a customer at the same time,@ Strader said. Joe Siderowicz, Vice President of Simplex's service division, praises SolutionBuilder because, unlike an employee, knowledge in this database will never leave the company. (Waltner 1998)

#### Drawbacks of Intranets

Siderowicz's comment introduces how the same aspects of technology that provide great benefits can also be detrimental to a company as a whole and to the employees individually. In highly competitive information-based fields the principal differentiating factor between employees is the employees' knowledge. Employees may feel less secure in their jobs once their special knowledge has been added to the company's repository of information. They may perceive themselves as being less important to the company because their brain has been stripped of all of its information.

#### Fears About Job Security

Many companies recognize that their employees have unique knowledge--knowledge that if shared could help the company be more profitable. However, some employees may feel that by sharing their unique knowledge, they are opening the way for themselves to be downsized. A Swedish bearing manufacturer is attempting to capture one employee's unique product-code creation knowledge before he retires. Rather than have him teach the process to one person, he is teaching it to a program developer who is designing an intranet program allowing everyone in the plant to create product codes. (David 1998) This company-wide product-code program will mean a little more responsibility for each employee and one fewer employee when the man retires.

#### Wrong links

Using the wrong method or *link* can lead to failure. For example, if companies try to share tacit knowledge through weak links such as e-mail or voice mail, the people using these links will not be as effective. However, if they are trying to share explicit knowledge, these intranet-run weak links are much more efficient than their strong link counterparts such as meetings and training sessions. (Hansen 1998)

Many companies are decreasing the number of meetings, substituting these meetings with intranets. People who feel there are too many meetings view this as a huge plus to intranets. However, some people feel there is something in face-to-face contacts that is missing from computer-based communications. For example, many people say it is much easier to say *Ano@* to a request received by e-mail, whereas it is harder to say *Ano@* by telephone or in person. People often forget there is a human behind each e-mail that is sent and so they are more willing to be nasty and say things they would never say to somebodys face. A good example is a recent general e-mail that was spammed to each student at a large private university. Many recipients were irritated by the senseless e-mails that filled their boxes and sent unkind e-mails to the assistant to the university president. Had the students been face to face with this authority figure, it is highly unlikely anyone would have called him inappropriate names; however, because this official apparently sent this e-mail, students did not recognize him as an authority figure, but simply as a man behind a computer screen; thus, he faced the ensuing onslaught of hundreds of e-mail messages from angry students. This incident brings up another important issue surrounding intranets—intranet security.

#### Ineffective Security

Companies must safeguard against both external and internal intruders of their system. In the aforementioned example, the e-mails sent under the name of the assistant to the president were not actually sent by him, but by a few students who discovered a way to send messages to the whole campus using the assistants e-mail address. Proper

securities are not difficult to put in place, but they are crucial. Fortunately, the e-mails were harmless college pranks; but, in the business world, real harm may be done by posting incorrect information in someone else's name. Imagine receiving a general e-mail announcing a better benefits package, only to find out later it was a hoax. The dissemination of correct information is key to successful intranets; the dissemination of misinformation can destroy the effectiveness of intranets.

## **Similarities Between Taylorism and Intranets**

The underlying theme of both Taylorism and intra company connectedness via intranets is the goal to maximize efficiency. Both Taylorism and intranets have enjoyed some success toward achieving this goal. On the other hand, many of the drawbacks common to both Taylorism and intranets are similar as well. These will be discussed below.

### **Dehumanizing**

The body of the worker and his or her ability to work were the most important asset to a scientifically managed company in the industrial age. In the modern age, with emphasis on knowledge management, the most important asset a company has is the mind of its workers. Peter Drucker said,

*The true investment in the knowledge society is not in machines and tools but in the knowledge of the knowledge worker. The industrial worker needed the capitalist infinitely more than the capitalist needed the industrial worker. . . In the knowledge society the most probable assumption for organizations is that they need knowledge workers far more than knowledge workers need them. (Drucker 1994)*

Is extracting the knowledge from the minds of employees and posting it on-line more dehumanizing than Taylor's using his workers as mere machines? Some say yes and others say no. Thomas A. Stewart, in his book *Intellectual Capital*, argues that the information age is not dehumanizing humans. Proof of this, he says, is that humans now are studying machines to see how they can make the machines more human-like and more user-friendly. Computer programmers and software developers try to make their programs serve their users in the most efficient manner and they try to pattern programs after the way people think. (Stewart 1997)

However, the reasoning behind all of the improvements made to computers is to allow workers to work more efficiently, without making them feel like they're working harder. This is the same concept behind Taylorism. If a computer can be programmed to make routine decisions, based on how people think, then only difficult, non-routine decisions must be handled by humans. Thus, knowledge workers will not spend the majority of their time with trivial matters, but they will spend their time on important issues.

### **Best Practices**

Taylor noted that several ways to execute every job exist and that some ways are more efficient than others. For example, new hires are usually trained by their co-workers and thus work in a similar manner to their co-workers. Taylor insists that managers must find and teach the most efficient practices to their workers for optimal output. Corporate intranets share this aspect of Taylorism-- to put key information in the hands of employees so they can see what other co-workers have done and work in a similar fashion. Managers can monitor work done in other departments and connect workers who might benefit from the knowledge of other employees. Or maybe a broker has a very successful system for recommending stocks to her clients. A manager may ask the



broker to place this system online for the whole company to use, thus improving everyone's efficiency and the company's profitability.

### **Managers Control**

Managers were crucial to the success of scientifically managed companies. If a manager didn't continuously evaluate and improve production processes, the company would not maximize efficiency and profitability. Therefore, the manager's role was critical to the bottom line of a company. Because a company's intranet performs a similar role now as the manager did then, the intranet can be a critical resource. Rowan Snyder, of Coopers & Lybrand, discussed one of the great ironies of highly technical group-sharing technologies. He shows how an intranet can actually be counterproductive in its role as a information manager. He says the more advanced the strategy, the more pressure is placed on having the necessary skills to support the program. Companies try to offset the costs of more skilled workers by limiting the number of people who use the resource. He said the more a company wants to deploy high-tech groupware, the more centrally managed the company must be, the inverse result desired from groupware. (Coleman 1997)

### **Efficiency and Success**

Every company wants to be successful, but how exactly can success be defined? Taylor's version of success listed using the smallest combined expenditure of human effort plus nature's resources plus the cost for the use of capital in the shape of machines, buildings, etc.. Economist Paul Romer identified that in the information age, the efficient use of company resources, such as ideas, knowledge, and intellectual capital, as the essential ingredients for success. (Ibid) One of the main reasons companies decided to be scientifically managed during the industrial period and are deciding to be intranet connected today is because of the desire to utilize resources identified by managers as under-used.

### **Under Utilization of Resources**

Taylor became aware of a misconception held by many of his factory workers--the harder they worked, the more likely it would be that the company would run out of work for them to do and somebody would lose his job. This led to a practice of *soldiering* or intentionally working slowly to limit daily output. Outraged by this practice, Taylor broke up work groups. Workers in the 1990s are also practicing a form of soldiering by withholding important information from their co-workers. For example, some workers will withhold electronic feedback for fear of upsetting co-workers, particularly superiors, about their pet projects. This withheld feedback can cause inferior service and longer product development. Office gossip continues around the water cooler to prevent everyone in the firm from accessing the tidbit of information they may want only a select group of employees to know. (Ibid)

## ***Differences Between Taylorism and Intranets***

Taylorism and intranets have many similarities, particularly regarding how information is viewed as critical to employee efficiency. But this is where the similarities regarding information end. Knowledge is power. Under Taylor, workers were only given enough *information* to complete their daily task. He told them exactly what to do and how to do it, based on what he thought would be most efficient. The weakness of this aspect of Taylorism is that his workers' efficiency could only be maximized to the extent of *his knowledge*. The whole rationale behind intranets is just the opposite. Managers want to empower their employees by giving them as much relevant information as possible, *allowing them to create their own knowledge* and work as efficiently as possible.

### **Managers Attitude**

A major difference between Taylorism and intranet-enhanced knowledge management is the attitude of the manager. Taylorism was a "father knows best" attitude whereas knowledge management is a "worker knows best" attitude. (Stewart 1997) Taylor micro managed because he didn't believe his workers were intelligent enough to find the most efficient way to work. Taylor said,

*One of the very first requirements for a man who is fit to handle pig iron as a regular occupation is that he shall be so stupid and so phlegmatic that he more nearly resembles in his mental make-up the ox than any other type . . . Therefore the workman who is best suited to handling pig iron is unable to understand the real science of doing this class of work. He is so stupid that the word "percentage" has no meaning to him, and he must consequently be trained by a man more intelligent than himself . . . (Taylor 1913)*

Currently, it is the manager's job to make sure his or her subordinates have access to the information that will allow them to work more efficiently. However, managers don't have to lead workers by the hand in making every decision. With the use of intranets, employees are viewed as intelligent enough to be able to study and analyze information for themselves, thus allowing them to make the most informed decision possible.

### **Collaboration**

Yet another example of differences between Taylorism and intranets is the use of collaboration among workers. The only collaboration Taylor saw in his factories was workers teaching fellow workers the importance of soldiering and how soldiering contributed to the well-being of all employees. New workers would begin working hard at Taylor's plant--often twice as hard as long-time employees. Within a few days, Taylor noticed that new workers either realized they were working much harder than everyone else while receiving the same pay, or fellow workers told them they were working too hard and this would contribute to somebody losing a job. Either scenario led new workers to decrease their output in an attempt to conform to their fellow workers standards.

Soldiering left a sour taste in Taylor's mouth and he did everything he could to prevent employees from influencing one another. Employees were given a certain amount of pig iron they had to move; he placed each employee's pig iron in a separate location to discourage interaction between workers. He placed inspection stations for bicycle ball bearing inspectors were placed far enough apart that the workers could not easily talk to one another; employees either had to yell, inviting the whole plant to listen to the conversation, or wait until breaks to speak to one another. The jobs that Taylor managed were simple, manual labor tasks that required little knowledge and skill. Taylor found the best methods and then trained the employees in these methods. This is in direct contrast to intranets' goal of increased collaboration.

One of the underlying premises of intranets is to encourage collaboration throughout organizations. Intranets allow various departments on multiple continents to search for the best practices of all the workers and then to use whichever practices work best for them. A manager may direct employees to what he or she sees as a good practice, but employees aren't necessarily told which method is the best method. Managers recognize that knowledge workers have their own style and that there may not be one "best practice." Virtual teams, working through an intranet, are becoming more common. Collaboration through intranets is an often-overlooked benefit to companies bottom line and is the essence of good knowledge management. Taylorism encouraged an every-man-for-himself attitude in regards to work practices whereas intranet-facilitated knowledge management promotes individual contribution for the good of the whole. These differing views on collaboration have contributed to the various incentive systems put into practice by managers.

### **Employee Incentives**

Taylor felt the best method of retrieving quality work, knowledge, skill, ingenuity, and goodwill from his workers was to give special incentives such as rapid advancement, monetary bonuses, better working conditions, or better working hours. He also felt some incentives worked better than others. The most effective incentives were those that the employees could quickly and easily identify with their improved and increased output. Taylor wanted to ensure that workers received enough incentives to feel good about their job and to work even harder for the success of the company.

Taylor's most commonly used incentive was paying a high daily wage upon completion of an assigned task. Taylor believed that by offering a high daily wage (often twice the wage offered by other factories) and by detailing each task to be completed, he could ensure his workers were putting in a fair day of high quality work. But to achieve this high output, workers had to make the connection between high wages and task completion. Every day they received notice as to whether or not they had accomplished their task and earned their full days wage. He did not think that end-of-the-year bonuses, contingent upon the company's profitability, were a good enough incentive for workers to work at their full potential.

The main reason some employees work is for their paycheck. Workers with special knowledge that sets them apart from everyone else must be given good enough incentives to share this knowledge with others. If a company's culture does not promote sharing, the company may find it difficult to obtain information from employees that can be disseminated throughout the company. Ernst & Young rewards its employees for their knowledge contributions to the company as a whole. The rewards cannot be maxed out unless a certain level or threshold is reached. (Coleman 1997) Just as managers had to ensure high product quality when employees were rewarded simply for the number of products produced daily, managers today must encourage good ideas, not ideas simply for idea's sake, but ideas that may actually benefit the firm.

Other firms link bonuses to the profitability of the company. These companies indirectly say to their employees, "if the company is successful because you help to contribute to the bottom line, you will receive a portion of the company's success back." Frederick Herzberg and his colleagues said that economic incentives alone do not motivate workers, but merely compensate them for enduring the tedium of their jobs. Herzberg claimed that even in cases where financial incentives and bonus schemes had apparently succeeded in motivating employees, improvements often resulted as much from increases in job content and responsibility as increases in pay. (Sheldrake 1996) Sometimes the only incentive a worker needs to contribute to his or her company through an intranet is to see the benefits they themselves can receive from an intranet. If they realize how the intranet can save them time, they will be more likely to contribute for the good of the whole. Other workers just want to be a part of the intranet community and so they willingly contribute to the system. The bottom line is that workers generally must see how adopting a new work system will benefit them. Whether it be more money, a feeling of belonging, or more knowledge, there must be something in it for them, or else a lack of cooperation may ensue.

## **Conclusion**

All programs designed to improve employees' efficiency will have some effect on employees. The implementation and continued use of any program must be done with these questions in mind: How will this affect my employees? Do the benefits to the company and to the organization outweigh the negative affects of this system? Both Taylorism and intranets help companies be more efficient; however, managers must be careful that the programs they deploy have not only the companys best interest in mind, but also employees best interest.

In the modern age of information, managers implementing intranets must ensure that their goal is to facilitate the ease with which jobs may be accomplished. As employees recognize that the implementation of intranets will benefit them, they will have an easier time adopting and using the new system. However, if they view the intranet as a way to downsize workers, they will not share the unique knowledge they have with others. They will try to protect their job by hoarding their key asset: knowledge. The function of managers is to ensure that knowledge is being shared throughout an organization and that the people and their ideas are made to feel more important than the system.

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