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The trust deficit between workers and organizations isn't personal. It's systemic.

Lingering distrust around work and workplace monitoring is highlighting the need for organizations to rethink foundational policies, processes, and practices.

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A small, cheap product is quietly appearing on desks across many firms. It comes in several flavors: a small USB plug (much like the adapter for a wireless mouse) or a USB-enabled podium for your mouse to rest on when you're not using it. Both serve the same function: to constantly "jiggle" your mouse, creating the illusion of activity where there is none. They're intended to fool monitoring software, which often assumes that a lack of movement implies a lack of work rather than that the worker may be attending to some noncomputer related task—listening intently in a meeting or taking notes on a physical notepad, for example.

While seemingly benign, mouse jigglers are a symptom of a much larger problem. Organizations are introducing workplace monitoring software in an effort to track and so improve employee productivity, while workers are engaging in *productivity theater*[1] (such as using mouse jigglers) to appear productive. This strange dynamic is a symptom of deeper problems lying under the surface, undiagnosed.

Work and workplace monitoring, even when driven by a positive intention to create value for organizations and workers alike, is instead deepening the trust chasm between employers and employees. The underlying cause of this growing trust deficit goes beyond isolated incidents or individual actions, but rather the systemic dysfunctions—in the work practices, policies, and processes—that permeate the organization. If leaders want to realize their performance and productivity aspirations, then efforts to build trust must extend beyond the interpersonal to the organizational.

Workplace monitoring: Good intentions, poor outcomes

Workplace monitoring tools—and the policies and processes they support—appear to be evolving in a dystopian direction. From manufacturing and frontline workers to information and knowledge professionals, and even managers and executives, technology is enabling a new era of monitoring and micromanagement for them. Initial hopes that this technology would encourage productivity improvement, foster well-being, and improve job quality have given way to fears that it appears to be driving us toward an unhappy and unproductive future of bad jobs. Quiet quitting[2] (where disgruntled employees restrict their daily work to only the tasks listed in their job descriptions, arriving at work on time but departing the minute the workday ends) has gone from an oddity to a distinct trend. On the other hand, loud quitting[3] (where workers are actively disengaged and may work to undermine employers' goals) is on the rise. Disillusioned workers might even turn to over-employment,[4] simultaneously holding down two or more full-time jobs, as they find gaming the system more rewarding than investing themselves and their career in one workplace.

Yet there is nothing inevitable about a dystopian technological future. How the technologies at our disposal are approached is often more important than the particular technologies used.[5] There's a material difference, for example, between a mortar and pestle used to pound basil, pine nuts, and olive oil to make pesto for a friendly dinner party, and a Roman slave using the same technology to pound meat all day in preparation for a party.[6] Similarly, a smartphone can be used strategically to enhance and uplift productivity, or it may be used in a less purposeful and distracting manner, losing time passively scrolling though social media or playing games that affect one's sense of overall well-being. A useful shorthand is to think of technology not as a *thing* but as a form of human action. New technology creates new opportunities, but it's how these opportunities are used that determines if the technology will be liberating or oppressive.[7]

It's not that the executives and managers designing these work systems necessarily have bad intentions. Systemic dysfunction is often the unintended consequence of many otherwise well-meaning decisions. The intention is likely to foster the adoption of more productive and healthy work habits by providing workers with data on where they actually invest their time (rather than where they think they invest it) and by enabling them to compare themselves and their work habits with their peers. This emphasis on quantifying organizational performance could be seen as a riff on the quantified-self movement—an aspiration that "self-knowledge through numbers" will enable us to improve ourselves and our work.[8]

But what started as a project to provide workers with fine-grained activity data to help them improve their own performance has resulted in that same data being used to drive performance management and renumeration processes over which the worker has little (if any) influence. Workers find themselves beholden to workplace monitoring software, their day divided into even-thinner slices with each slice individually accounted for (and renumerated).

Despite this, few executives have paid products like mouse jigglers much attention.

Stories of quiet quitting or productivity theater are assumed to only apply to other organizations (not their own) with higher-than-usual levels of productivity paranoia.[9] This is not necessarily the case. It can be difficult, if not impossible, to appreciate what it's like to work in a quantified organization[10] without experiencing it for oneself. There's a fine line between providing workers with tools to improve their productivity and creating an overbearing work environment that drives them to productivity theater. Often it takes a personal connection—a conversation with a family member using a mouse jiggler, for example—before an executive realizes that the experience of those working in their carefully designed quantified organization might make workers less productive and more distrustful of the organization.

Organizational trust is in trouble

The root of the problem is that well-meaning leaders, executives who likely trust individual workers, don't trust "workers" as a group. When making operational decisions or designing new policy and processes, leaders often treat workers like naughty children to be kept in line, regardless of their trust in individual workers. Their focus then naturally tends toward monitoring and compliance and yields policies and processes that indicate distrust in workers, which, in turn, erodes workers' trust in the organization. Workers feel disempowered and micromanaged and respond with compensating actions that create the illusion of productivity at the cost of real productivity.

"Eighty percent of employees who have high levels of trust in their employers feel motivated to work, versus less than 30% of those who don't. But less than half of workers say they trust their employer."

Much has been written about the importance of trust in the workplace. Worker trust in the organization, and in management, is associated with more productive and happier workers. Trust makes organizations stronger while reducing turnover and improving engagement and is correlated with superior productivity and job quality.

Trust's importance in the workplace has grown as work has become less transactional and task-based, and more reliant on collaboration, working in teams, and creativity. Psychological safety, for example, is an important contributor to both creativity and working digitally and is closely related to trust.[11]

Organizations commonly only consider one aspect of trust: trust as an interpersonal phenomenon, the relationship between a worker and a manager. Consequently, diagnosing a lack of trust often results in efforts to foster trust by encouraging and training managers and executives to behave in a trustworthy way: demonstrating empathy and kindness toward employees, communicating in a straightforward manner, and consistently and dependably delivering on commitments made to employees.

What has been missing is an acknowledgment that workers don't only trust their managers as individuals; they also trust them as extensions of the organization they represent.[12] Trust is both contextual and collective. An employee may trust their manager as an individual, for example, while not trusting them in their role as a manager. Similarly, a manager may trust a particular worker as an individual, while distrusting "workers" as a group. It's difficult for workers to separate their experience with workplace monitoring solutions from the context of interactions with their manager.

What's more, a worker's trust is also informed by the collective experiences of their colleagues. Many interactions workers have with their manager (and the larger organization) involve their whole team and not just themselves as individuals. Workplace monitoring need only impact a colleague, rather than the worker directly, for the worker's trust in the firm and their manager to be affected. The challenging conversation of pay transparency is a case in point, with perceptions of inequitable treatment quickly leading to discontent.[13] Workers respond by collectively developing and adopting behaviors to mitigate or otherwise compensate for what they see as excessive workplace monitoring or other impositions. Using a mouse jiggler is one such adaptive behavior that can quickly spread across a workplace. Like speeding, what is seen as a modest transgression—rule-breaking with a small "r"—is easily justified when "everyone is doing it."

Compensating behaviors trade actual productivity for perceived productivity—gaming workplace monitoring at the expense of getting work done. In one example of this, hospice chaplains tweaked their schedules to ensure that they regularly engaged in "spiritual care drive-bys" to game productivity metrics, investing time in an activity that was regularly monitored while neglecting other responsibilities that weren't.[14]

Productivity isn't the outcome of trust; it's the first step in unlocking it

The correlation between trust and productivity has led many executives to assume that improving trust should improve productivity—that causality runs from trust to productivity. This may be the case for interpersonal trust. However, it's not the case for organizational trust. In that case, causality runs from productivity to trust: creating a supportive and productive organization for the workers to inhabit fosters their trust in the organization.

Workers develop trust in an organization, and the managers representing it, when they feel that the organization is enabling them to be productive and have purpose and impact. This is both in an immediate sense (for the task at hand) and longitudinal sense (over their career). Workers react to what they see as unproductive, unfair, and unjustified management by collectively developing compensating actions. On the other hand, over the long term, workers who trust the organization to take care of them are more invested in their work and less likely to focus on either being seen to be doing a good job in order to earn a promotion or treating the organization as a temporary stepping-stone to the next opportunity.[15]

While workplace monitoring has been shown to have some positive effects (such as in reducing theft),[16] more extensive monitoring can backfire. Monitored employees are more likely to take unapproved breaks, disregard instructions, damage workplace property, and deliberately work at a slow pace, among other productivity-sapping and rule-breaking behaviors.[17] Monitoring makes employees feel less responsible for their own behavior. Managers are implicated as they are seen as part of the monitoring system—a cog in the firm's surveillance bureaucracy. Workers feel justified in leaving their personal values at the door, as they see the monitoring as excessive and potentially in contravention of the organization's stated values.[18]

It's common for leading practices around work and workplace monitoring to be tweaked in response to these negative consequences. Often a "Goldilocks" approach is suggested, with managers aiming for just the right amount of monitoring: not too much, not too little. This ignores the root cause of the problem, the reason why too much monitoring was implemented in the first place.

Trust works both ways: workers trusting management is contingent on management and executive leadership trusting workers. If organizations are to enjoy the benefits of trust, then managers need to foster interpersonal trust between themselves and the workers they manage; and they need to institute policies and processes that enable the workers to trust the system.

Creating organizations that can be trusted

To foster trust in organizations, we need to create organizations that can be trusted. A trustworthy organization is one where workers are empowered to be productive. It's an organization that openly shares information, decisions, processes as an essential part of building trust. It is also one where workers believe that policies and processes that bind the organization together treat them fairly and support them in their work and over the course of their career. What steps can organizations take to create this kind of trust?

Rethink what success looks like

One place to begin is to ask: What does the organization truly value?

There is often a difference between an organization's declared and revealed values.[19] It's common, for example, for an organization to declare that it values creativity while implicitly disincentivizing creativity in employees' work.[20] Or make statements that prioritize, value and support well-being that are not reflected in policies and processes that require workers to make trade-offs between their well-being and performance management targets. Answering the question "What does the organization value?" requires an evaluation of how staff (executives, managers, *and* workers) behave, how organizational policies and processes influence and shape these behaviors, and the consequences of these behaviors. What are the organization's *revealed* values?

Executives must measure *something* to make their organization legible and so enable them to manage it.[21] But there is a practical limit to what can be measured. Often, it's not possible to directly measure what management is most interested in, and thus measurements end up as a compromise: a tradeoff between what they would like to measure and what is practical to measure.

Creativity is a case in point. It's a deceptively simple concept—the creation of something novel and useful.[22] While the creativity of a work product can be measured,[23] it can be challenging to identify links between an act of creativity and the actions of a worker. This is because creativity is the result of a generative process—the product of interactions among the members of a team, work practices and management processes, and organizational culture—rather than the result of particular skills or tasks.[24] While it's possible to gauge the overall creative performance of a team, it can be challenging, if not impossible, to quantify the contribution of each team member.[25] In addition, many of the interactions that lead to creative outcomes will be hidden or otherwise unrelated to the task at hand—as Grant Wood[26] (1891–1942) observed, "all the good ideas I ever had came to me when I was milking a cow."

"Creativity comes with a cost. If it is not

explicitly designed in, then it has been implicitly designed out."

As work has become increasingly digital, the once-clear line from worker through activity to outcome has eroded. Work has become more collaborative and complex, and the 21st-century skills required to successfully navigate this more complex world, such as creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, and cross-cultural interaction, don't have the same direct connection from activity to outcome. Some activities will be impractical to measure and so be invisible. There is also British economist Charles Goodhart's law to contend with, that "[w]hen a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure."[27] Worker effort will favor activities that are measured even if this requires the worker to ignore other important but unmeasured activities, or to engage in compensating actions, such as conducting more "spiritual care drive-bys," substituting productivity theater for actual productivity.

Not everything that matters can be measured.[28] Performance management frameworks are necessarily based on a simplified view of the thing being managed. The history of scientific forestry in the 18th and 19th centuries provides a cautionary tale[29] of how neglecting what hasn't been measured can easily lead to killing the very thing an organization is trying to nurture. Scientific forestry at the time focused on tree health and timber yields, while neglecting the broader ecological functions of forests, such as biodiversity, water regulation, and soil preservation. While the scientific forestry improved productivity in the first generation of new trees, forests often failed in the second, as the new practices had made the forest more vulnerable to pests, diseases, and ecological disruptions. Mouse jigglers and quiet quitting are both signals that an organization's policies and processes are biased toward what is easy to measure instead of what should be measured.

A disconnect between an organization's declared and revealed values is a sign of systemic dysfunction, where the policies and processes that bind the organization together are driving the organization away from its goals. An organization's declared values must be realized in its operating model, as it's the operating model that shapes the revealed values. For example, a close reading of many operating models will often fail to find a mention of creativity. Creativity comes with a cost and so if it is not explicitly designed in, then it has been implicitly designed out.[30]

Be mindful of unwritten expectations

Organizations have both formal and informal sides. The carefully designed equitable policies and process guardrails that are part of the formal organization can be subverted if leadership publicly acknowledges or celebrates things that go against communicated organizational policies and processes. A hard-charging sales team might be rewarded even if the team's success relies on out-of-hours commitments from team members—commitments that go against company policy and disenfranchise workers who have responsibilities outside of the office. Celebrating a team for wrestling a struggling project over the line might be rewarding failures in planning and engaging the client early in the journey, rather than astute technical and client management skills late in the engagement. Or a company's commitment to a work-from-home policy—to create a more equitable workplace—can be undermined if informal face-to-face networks are essential for promotion.

Public recognition by executives of long hours, out-of-hours responsiveness, or participation in after-work activities sends a strong social signal that these actions are valued by the organization. This is true even if the actions are not aligned with a firm's declared values. Informal values can easily trump formal policies and processes.

"Public recognition of informal values—long hours, out-of-hours responsiveness, participation in after-work activities—sends a strong social signal about what's

actually valued by the organization."

Executives must lead by example, both in doing the right thing and in being seen to do the right thing.[31] Subordinates eager to court their manager can easily go astray, anticipating a need that doesn't align with the organization's declared values.[32] For example, a leader's off-hand comment that "we always seem to need this meeting room" could translate to their subordinate block-booking the room against company policy. Other executives (and subordinates) will see the block-booking and copy the (minor) transgression, which snowballs until most of the rooms are booked but also empty (against company policy), disrupting work and dragging down productivity while disheartening affected employees and fostering an "us and them" mentality. An executive unclear in their expressed needs and actions can easily create unwritten expectations that quickly lead to systemic dysfunction.

Cocreate policies with workers

Executives should consider how workers will experience life inside the policies and processes they are crafting. What trade-offs will the workers make? Are these trade-offs constructive or destructive? Will they result in a productivity boost or in productivity theater?

It can be difficult for managers and leaders to understand and appreciate these trade-offs without experiencing directly what it's like to work within the proposed polices and processes. Seeing things from workers' perspectives requires integrating workers into the policy and process development. Cocreating policy and process with their workers fosters a culture of trust, collaboration and inclusion[33]—something done *with* workers and not *to* them. Along with the usual surveys, firms can create a "voice of the worker" council or include representative workers directly into process and policy development teams.

Integrating workers into policy and process development can be challenging for management as workers bring to the table a different set of priorities. They might ask for discretion to work in the way they find most productive and that integrates with their life outside work, highlighting their need to negotiate a coherent digital environment when working digitally[34] and to manage the "greasy boundary" between remote and in-office work.

This implies crafting policies and processes that share responsibility and accountability between management and worker, rather than delegating it to one or the other. Policies should clearly identify what the organization mandates, where worker discretion applies, and where there needs to be negotiation between the worker and the organization. Workers must also be provided with tools and freedoms to apply this discretion, for example, policies that enable workers to flex their workday to accommodate personal needs, such as visiting a doctor or taking an elderly parent to an appointment.

Additionally, policies should provide clear direction on where worker discretion ends and organizational requirements begin. Management might, for example, allow workers freedom in where and when they work, while also requiring that some work be conducted face-to-face as a means of building interpersonal relationships and trust within the team.[35] Rather than focusing on the false dichotomy of working in the office versus working from home, the policy can enable flexible working that also allows for important face-to-face touchpoints that build human relationships and help bind teams together.

Building more human organizations

Organizations are populated by humans with human needs, and these human needs must be factored into policy and process design to get the most out of both the organization and the people within it. Moreover, the improved and more sustainable business performance every leader is chasing is contingent on creating organizations that not only account for these human needs but also treat them as a key contributor to business performance.

Concerns about the low levels of trust in many organizations—and the associated poor business performance—are well placed. What seems to be neglected, though, is that productivity is as much, if not more, a product of an organization's policies and processes as it is the habits of the individuals who inhabit it.[36]

New technology enables us to quantify many day-to-day work activities. At the same time, much of what workers do is unmeasured and possibly even unmeasurable. Business and work have become more complex and contextual, and this is breaking down the simple calculus of individual action to result. It's all too easy to create a policy and process environment that drives an organization's revealed values away from its declared ones, creating systemic disfunction. Leadership needs to ensure that they, and the policies and processes that comprise their operating model, represent the organization's values.

Measurement is a requirement to make organizations legible and so manageable. However, it's also important to ensure that organizations are also legible to workers: Can they see and navigate the policies and processes that affect them? Workers need to understand how the organization works and how they can work with the organization, where worker discretion is encouraged, where negotiation is needed, and what the organizational mandates are.

Because trust between workers and organizations is both contextual and collective, it is critical that organizations are seen to be treating workers fairly and equally—both within and without the organization. This implies creating clear guard rails to prevent known problems, guidelines on how transgressions will be dealt with, and ensuring consistent application of these policies across the organization and across time.

The assumption has long been that low levels of trust have lowered productivity, when it's possible that causality runs the other way around. Trust is the symptom rather than the cause, with high levels of trust a sign that an organization has created a productive and fulfilling work environment.

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Endnotes

1. Isabel Berwick, "Don't turn your job into 'Productivity theatre,'" *Financial Times*, July 5, 2023.

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2. Kimberly Quinn, "Quietly Quitting," *Psychology Today*, November 5, 2022.

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3. Sarah Jackson, "Nearly 1 in 5 workers are 'loud Quitting' their jobs, a new Gallup Poll says — and it's way more extreme than 'quiet quitting,'" *Business Insider,* June 24, 2023.

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4. Bryan Lufkin, "The 'overemployed' workers juggling remote jobs," *BBC Worklife*, September 28, 2021.

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5. Kranzberg's First Law has it that "[t]echnology is neither good nor bad; nor is it neutral." Technology creates (new) possibilities—it's our choices that determine where these possibilities take us. See: Melvin Kranzberg, "Technology and History: 'Kranzberg's Laws,'" *Technology and Culture* 27 (3), 1986, p. 544–560. doi:10.2307/3105385.

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6. “A mortar and pestle was a different thing for the Roman slave forced to pound up highly amalgamated mixtures for hours on end for his master’s enjoyment than it is for me: a pleasing object with which I make pesto for fun, on a whim” in "Introduction” from Bee Wilson, *Consider the Fork: A History of How We Cook and Eat* (New York: Basic Books, 2012).

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7. Ruth Schwartz Cowan, in her book *More work for mother*, famously pointed out that the domestic appliances that were intended to liberate homemakers, instead resulted in society lifting its standards and creating, in net, more work for mother. See: Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

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8. The Quantified Self (QS) movement is a community whose members use technology to track, analyze, and measure various aspects of their lives, such as physical activity, sleep patterns, mood, diet, and more. Their goal is to gain self-knowledge and self-improvement through the collection and analysis of personal data. The movement has gained momentum due to the proliferation of wearable devices and health apps. Participants hope to optimize their habits, improve health and productivity, and gain deeper insights into their overall well-being. See, Quantified Self, “What Is Quantified Self?” accessed August 10, 2023; Deborah Lupton, *The Quantified Self: A Sociology of Self-Tracking* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2016).

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9. Productivity paranoia is a term coined by Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella to describe leaders' concerns hybrid or remote workers are not doing enough. See: Jean Brittain and Kelly Simmons, “The paradox of ‘Productivity Paranoia,’” *Quartz*, April 17, 2023.

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10. The phrase ‘quantified organisation’ was coined around 2012 and is broadly concerned with using data-driven approaches to management to enable an organization to improve workforce operations and achieve organizational goals.

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11. For the connection between creativity and psychological safety, see: Lance M. Frazier, Stav Fainshmidt, Ryan L. Klinger, Amir Pezeshkan, and Veselina Vracheva, "Psychological safety: A meta-analytic review and extension: PERSONNEL PSYCHOLOGY," *Personnel Psychology* 70 (1), 2017, p. 113–165. doi:10.1111/peps.12183.

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12. Boas Shamir and Yael Lapidot, "Trust in organizational superiors: Systemic and collective considerations," *Organization Studies* 24 (3), SAGE Publications Ltd., 2013, p. 463–491. doi:10.1177/0170840603024003912.

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13. Nicole Taylor Rogers, "US pay transparency laws result in worker discontent," *The Irish Times*, March 31, 2023.

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14. Jodi Kantor, Arya Sundaram, Aliza Aufrichtig, and Rumsey Taylor, "The rise of the worker productivity score," *The New York Times*, August 15, 2022.

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15. It's been noted in the computer games industry, for example, that a short-term view of staffing might be costing organizations valuable institutional knowledge, degrading the quality of their products. See: Nicole Carpenter, "Why tears of the kingdom's bridge physics have game developers wowed," *Polygon*, May 25, 2023.

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16. Lamar Pierce, Daniel C. Snow, and Andrew McAfee, "Cleaning house: The impact of information technology monitoring on employee theft and productivity," *Management Science* 61 (10), 2015, p. 2299–2319. doi:10.1287/mnsc.2014.2103.

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17. Chase Thiel, Julena M. Bonner, John Bush, David Welsh, and Niharika Garud, "Monitoring employees makes them more likely to break rules," *Harvard Business Review*, June 27, 2022.

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18. Ibid.

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19. We're using 'revealed' here in the same sense that economists talk about stated versus reveal preferences, an idea pioneered by economist Paul Samuelson in 1938. A reveal preference is one discovered by observing an individual's choices, how they act, rather than asking them their preferences. An organization's declared (or stated) values are the values listed on the organization's web site, while its revealed values as those that emerge from the actions of its staff.

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20. Creativity comes with a cost, so if we fail to make space for it in our policies and processes then we are implicitly designing it out of the organization. See: Peter Evans-Greenwood, Robbie Robertson, Robert Hillard, and Peter Williams, *Setting the stage for creative performance*, *Deloitte Insights*, October 29, 2021.

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21. It is impossible to manage large organizations—or any complex social or natural system—without standardizing and quantifying them, changing them to make them transparent and easily measurable, *legible*. Organizational legibility is a central theme of *Seeing Like a State* by James C. Scott. Scott argues that states and other powerful institutions have a tendency to simplify complex realities into quantifiable, easily recognizable, and standardized forms. They do this by creating specific categories, measurements, and administrative systems that can be easily monitored and controlled. The goal is to enhance the state's capacity to intervene in various aspects of society, including urban planning, agriculture, taxation, public health, and education. While legibility aims to enhance governance and control, it can lead to unintended consequences, marginalize local knowledge, and erode cultural diversity. See: James C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, Nachdr. Yale Agrarian Studies (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999).

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22. Robert J. Sternberg and Todd I. Lubart, "The concept of creativity: prospects and paradigms," in *Handbook of Creativity*, edited by Robert J. Sternberg, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1998) p. 3-15. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511807916.003.

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23. It's difficult, maybe even impossible, to measure creative performance objectively, as we do with weight or distance. However, a range of reliable subjective methods have been developed to gauge the creativity of particular works. These subjective metrices use *consensual assessment*, where a team of representative expert use a rubric to gauge how creative a particular work is when compared to other work in the same domain. For examples see, Teresa M. Amabile, "The social psychology of creativity: A consensual assessment technique," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 43, no. 5 (1982): p. 997–1013; David H. Cropley, "The creative solution diagnosis scale (CSDS)," *Creativity in Engineering: Novel Solutions to Complex Problems, Explorations in Creativity Research* (San Diego: Academic Press, 2015), p. 78–85; Susan P. Besemer and Karen O'Quin, "Confirming the three-factor creative product analysis matrix model in an American sample," *Creativity Research Journal* 12, no. 4 (1999): p. 287–296.

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24. Creativity can be seen as "the interaction among aptitude, process and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context." See: Jonathan A. Plucker, Ronald A. Beghetto, Gayle T. Dow, "Why isn't creativity more important to educational psychologists? Potentials, pitfalls, and future directions in creativity research," *Educational Psychologist* (2), 2004, p. 83-96.

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25. One should also be cautious when measuring the creativity of individual projects or outcomes. Creativity is a numbers game. Sometimes creativity sparks, other times it doesn't. If we improve the ingredients, then we can help creativity to spark more often. We can't, however, guarantee that a particular outcome will be creative.

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26. Grant Wood (1891-1942) was an American artist of the 20th century known for his iconic "American Gothic" painting.

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27. Named after British economist Charles Goodhart, who is credited with expressing the core idea of the adage in his 1975 article on monetary policy in the United

Kingdom. See: Charles A. E. Goodhart, C. A. E. 1984. “Problems of Monetary Management: The UK Experience,” in *Monetary Theory and Practice: The UK Experience*, edited by C. A. E. Goodhart (London: Macmillan Education, UK., 1984) p. 91-121.

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28. V. F. Ridgway observed in 1956 that not everything that matters can be measured and not everything that we can measure matters and ignoring this distinction can lead to dysfunctional organizations. The previous paragraph unpacks this in the context of trust and worker productivity. See: V. F. Ridgway, “Dysfunctional consequences of performance measurements,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 1 (2): 1956, p. 240–247.

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29. Scientific forestry emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries as a response to growing concerns about deforestation and the need for sustainable timber production. Analytic frameworks were developed to gauge the health of a forest, to make it legible to managers. Data was collected and used to derive insights that were then used to improve the forest’s productivity via management and technological improvements. Unfortunately, all too often scientifically managed forest saw productivity improve for the first generation of trees only to crash in the second. The focus on timber yields (productivity) neglected the broader ecological functions of forests, such as biodiversity conservation, water regulation, and soil preservation, and how these unmeasured ecological functions contributed to the forest’s overall health and productivity. This made the forests more vulnerable to pests, diseases, and ecological disruptions. Moreover, scientific forestry’s top-down approach often disregarded the knowledge and practices of local communities who had managed forests sustainably. See: James C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998).

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30. Peter Evans-Greenwood, Robert Hillard, Robbie Robertson, Peter Williams, and Matt Lawson, *Investing in creative potential*, *Deloitte Insights*, May 4, 2022.

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31. Technology can be our friend here as we can leverage tech and tools to lead by, for

example, scheduling emails and messages within business hours to signal respect for work life balance, empowering autonomy and contributing to building trust within teams.

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32. It should go without saying that many of moral and ethical failures in organizations depend on someone facilitating a behavior in this way.

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33. Sue Cantrelle, Karen Weisz, and Michael Griffiths, "Harnessing worker agency," Deloitte, January 8, 2023.

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34. A key success factor when working digitally in teams is for workers to be able to negotiate a coherent, shared digital work environment. If this team draws members from a range of organizations, rather than just one, then this often necessitates using non-standard tools and platforms. This is one of the sources of shadow IT, as the tools and platforms provided by the organization are not suitable for the task at hand. See: Peter Evans-Greenwood, Rosemary Stockdale, and Tim Patston, *The digital-ready workplace: Supercharging digital teams in the future of work*, *Deloitte Insights*, May 27, 2021.

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35. In a previous essay by the authors, *Negotiating the digital-ready organization*, it was suggested that management could require that some team meetings be face-to-face, but leave the precise location of the meeting to be decided by the team. See: Peter Evans-Greenwood, Alex Bennett, and Sue Solly, Negotiating the digital-ready organization, *Deloitte Insights*, March 30, 2022.

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36. Legendary statistician and management consultant W. Edwards Deming argued that 94% of most problems and possibilities for improvement belong to the system, not the individual. See: Edwards W. Deming, *Out of the Crisis*, (Boston: The MIT Press, 2018).

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