Effective Intelligence

1. Effective Intelligence

Effective Intelligence is a model of thinking that enables users to execute tasks more effectively. "Intelligence" in this context, entails choosing the right kinds of thought for each task, while "effectiveness assures that it will actually get done, and done well.

Effective Intelligence is based on research conducted by British consultant Jerry Rhodes, MA Oxon Dip Ed FBIM MIPM, and others beginning in the 1970s. The research was focused on "action" – on task completion. The model starts with the premise that our results come from our actions, which follow from our conclusions, which are in turn driven by our thinking. Most people are only dimly aware of the specific workings of their mind, and this unconscious, unmindful approach to thinking has the potential to misfire. Effective Intelligence shows that with conscious and mindful management of our thinking, the degree of effectiveness and efficiency between initial thinking and final result is improved.[1]

Underpinning Effective Intelligence is Rhodes' identification, categorization and labelling of all key mental activities – the **"thinking-intentions",** a concept new to the philosophy of science. Awareness of these categories and labels enables users to consciously direct an action that is otherwise unconscious and often less than optimally effective. Users assure they are applying the most appropriate thinking for the task at hand, thereby making them more effective at that task.

Thinking-intentions – known as "Thunks" – are used both as labels for the specific workings of the mind as well as labels for the thinking requirements of tasks. It was found that using the same "language" for both the thinking of individuals and the thinking requirements of tasks made it easier to recognise which of one's mental tools to deploy, and to steer any unconscious habits toward ways most likely to bring success.

The discovery that all "thinking-intentions" could be named, opened opportunity to create tools to improve the effectiveness of thinking. For example, the Effective Intelligence model led Rhodes to the creation of maps illustrating the kinds of thought processes generally found when successful outcomes are achieved. It is rare that the thinking requirements of a task perfectly align with one's thinking preferences. To address that, maps suggest where you might need to muster special effort with certain Thunks, or call on others to contribute where you are at a loss. Frequent users of Effective Intelligence are able to use the Thunks to make their own tools for any immediate need.

The origin of the Effective Intelligence model is the work done by Jerry Rhodes on the elements of creativity and how to help managers become more innovative in their thinking. This work came to the attention of Royal Philips in The Netherlands, who asked Rhodes to join their project team who were researching skillful thinking as a competitive advantage. A joint development project over four years between 1977 and 1981 identified the model of mind at the root of Effective Intelligence. Since then, continuous development from working with companies around the world, especially in North America and

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[1] Rhodes, Jerry and Sue Thame. (1988) The Colours of Your Mind, p11-17

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Europe, has built a comprehensive system of tools for more intelligent action. Rhodes licenses this system to practitioners by qualifying them to introduce and deliver Effective Intelligence to their clients.

2. Thinking-Intentions, or "Thunks"

The core innovation from the original research centres on intention, not in the ordinary sense that describes what one aims for – the data, but rather about how to think – the cognitive process. Rhodes has simplified the huge complexity of thought into just 25 mental actions. The research established that people use all 25 thinking-intentions to some degree or another and at some time or another, depending on their thinking preferences and the tasks with which they are confronted.

The Thunks can be seen as "thinking energies" or "mental muscles". They represent the diverse kinds of mental motivation, what thinking a person *intends to use* that could bring about the result they are hoping for, the best conclusion. They offer a conceptual vocabulary to describe not only one's thinking faculties but also the thought processes required for any problem to be solved or challenge to be met.[2]

People do not always marshal the most appropriate mix of Thunks for the situation they face, but by using the Effective Intelligence language of thinking-intentions – by thinking about thinking – you are taking the best action of which you are capable.

3. The Model:

a) Strategic or Tactical?
Since the Thunks claim to represent all known thought, they must clearly operate on many different levels of simplicity or complexity. At a strategic level, it is of profound importance to recognise whether a task being confronted requires new ideas that might work, or better information, before coming to judgment that deserves acting upon. Any decision will need all three, but the model empowers users to determine which is the priority now.
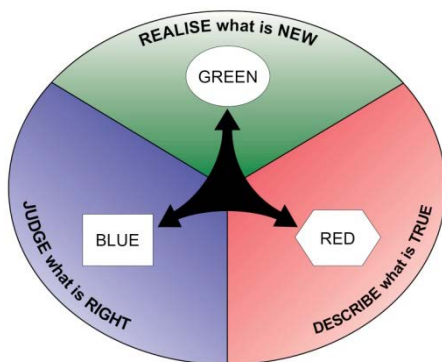
b) Subjective versus Objective Thinking
Incorrectly resolving the tensions between the subjective and objective can be disastrous, as when emotions are not treated properly or when real life is reduced to logic and numbers only. Certain Thunks specialise in either more worldly reality or more personal feelings, but all are aware of their opposite, so

[2] Rhodes, Jerry and Sue Thame (1988) The Colours of Your Mind, p38-44

they enable this model to embrace both the explicitly rational and the implicitly intuitive approach. Sometimes one of these two matters more than the other, and this is vital to get right.

c) Thunks and Tasks: The questions
The researchers posited that to think entails asking yourself a question that will deliver the needed answer. Continuing research has uncovered systematic patterns of questions that are typical of each Thunk and therefore form an analytic model of the brain and of tasks, equally. Questions act like keys that unlock a solution, but to find the right one(s) demands powerful imagination. This was the rationale for building thought maps of questioning.

4. Rhodes' Task Maps

Rhodes uses the term "mapping" to refer to the process of identifying the thinking requirements of a task, and through the use of Thunk questions, consciously adjusting one's thinking to match that of a task.[3] "Rhodes' Maps", based on observed best practices, offer schematic pictures of the essential thought processes required for a particular type of task. Anyone fluent in the Thunks vocabulary is able to map any task.

The main tasks mapped are those faced most frequently:
- **Orientation**: "Where am I in this situation, so which map next?"
- **Selling:** "How best do we persuade people?"
- **Strategy:** "Where do we need to go? "
- **Decision-making:** "What is the best choice for my goal? "
- **Planning:** "What needs to be done for this decision to be implemented? "
- **Learning:** "What else might be gained from this experience? "
- **Creating:** "From where do we get new ideas? "
- **Finding causes:** "What caused things to go wrong – or surprisingly well?"
- **Gathering information:** "Clarifying what is relevant. "
- **Innovating:** "How do we get from idea to action? "

3 Rhodes, Jerry and Sue Thame (1988) The Colours of Your Mind, p 241

Other, more specialized maps, such as Communicating, Teaching, Coaching, Delegating, and Quality Assurance are also available.

Complex task maps often include elements that are delivered by other maps, as when Innovating includes the process map for selling or influencing others. All maps also include what might be called subroutines, clusters and runs of Thunks that perform a smaller and much repeated activity such as assessing risk, identifying criteria, setting priority or working with the delegated plan of someone else.

Limbs develop almost automatic skills and habits from oft-repeated movements, as when touch-typing, writing your signature, or shaking hands: so do those mental muscles – the Thunks – where a person using them repeatedly can 'get the knack'. In fact, each Thunk embodies and executes its own array of thought processes and, in a sub-routine, joins up with others that are most likely to deliver what is needed for the activity at hand.

4a) Rhodes' Route Maps

In 2013, the How You Think website was released, designed for the smart phone. From The Centre for Effective Intelligence, Rhodes made mapping available online as a coaching service to users of Rhodes' Thinking-Intentions Profile (see below). This feature included twelve Rhodes' Route Maps for effective task completion. These are new versions of the Rhodes' Task Maps that work with the limitations of scrolling and small screen display through questioning that is iterative.
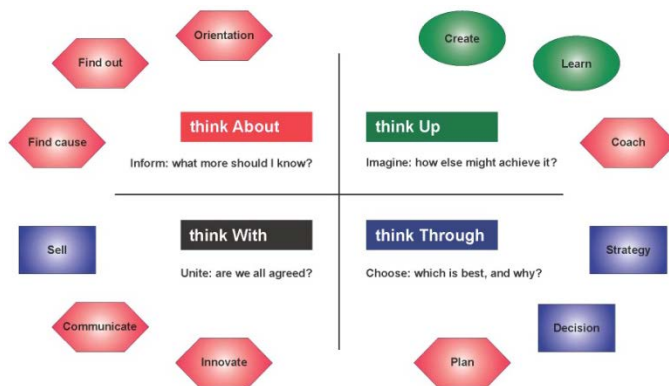
5. Rhodes' Thinking-Intentions Profile

Rhodes' Thinking-Intentions Profile (Rhodes' TIP) is a 24-question survey of 72 elements that results in an inventory of an individual's thinking preferences.

Rhodes' TIP reveals relative preferences for particular Thunks, showing that individuals value some mental operations more and others less. In any group of respondents, there will be a range of different profiles, each showing how differently each prefers to think – and ultimately to act – in situations they face.

Rhodes' TIP measures an preferential style or habit of mind, predicting how someone is likely to act. Rhodes' TIP is not a test, meaning it does not establish that someone is good or bad at these core kinds

of thinking. Since there are no "right" or "wrong" answers, participants suffer no inhibitions when sharing their profiles with others, including their boss, subordinates or others that matter to them.

The profile is intended to be used for individual awareness and development, giving individuals a way to recognise and label their thinking-intentions, relating one thinking operation to others in the context of their whole intelligence. They can also spot the thinking-intentions of other people, and see the value of contributions otherwise alien to, or even in conflict with, their own.

The 24 questions in a Rhodes' TIP present a range of typical management situations in which the subject is asked to choose between 3 different approaches; the choices actually represent various combinations of the 25 basic thinking operations. The questionnaire is structured to give as fair a chance as possible for each Thunk to be compared with its peers, while keeping the survey brief and manageable. There are no right or wrong answers, just a matter of individual preference.

All Rhodes' TIPs are debriefed in person by a professional trained and licensed to do so. During a debrief, the debriefer will highlight significant patterns, identify relationships between Thunks and between scores, and point out contrasts and affinities amongst the Thunks.

Rhodes Thinking-Intentions Profile was named *Instrument of the Year* at the American 98 Conference, in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Rhodes' TIP is available in nine languages:
- English
- French
- Spanish
- German
- Dutch
- Danish
- Chinese
- Swedish (not available online)
- Finnish (not available online)

As of July 2014, over 150,000 Profiles have been debriefed worldwide.
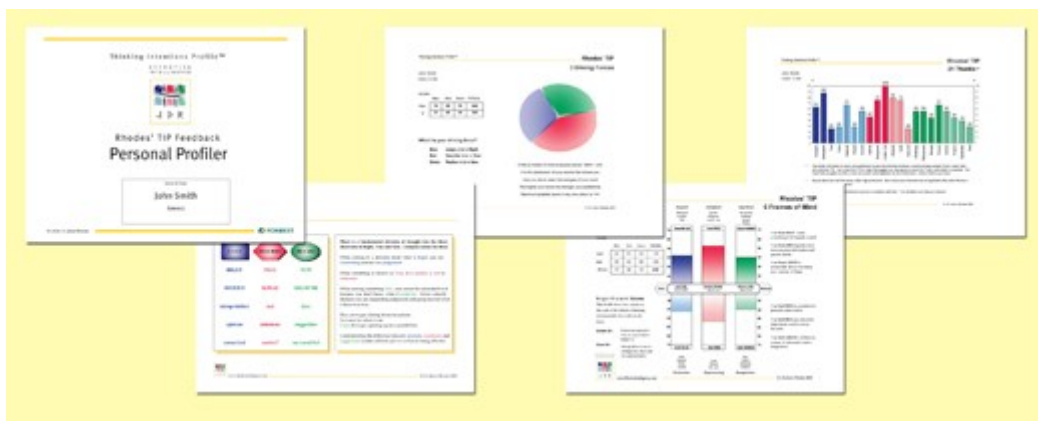
6. Original Research

The original research on Effective Intelligence was conducted at Royal Philips in The Netherlands beginning in 1977, in a project called Deva, a shortening of the Dutch word for "skilful thinking".[4] The goal was to come up with a generic methodology for dealing with challenging business situations of all kinds, that would give Philips' managers on every continent a competitive edge.[5] Philips invited Jerry D. Rhodes, MA Oxon DipEd FBIM MIPM to join the project team as their external consultant. The research had met its objectives by 1981 and has been in use ever since.

The team analysed a variety of sources of human experience, to simplify and clarify humanity's complex, but largely invisible, thinking faculties. The research developed along two main tracks: the Task, and the Person facing it. This allows Effective Intelligence to claim it is the only cognitive system to identify the impact of using specific combinations of mental approaches on outcomes.

One track was to identify a taxonomy of the most universal kinds of problems frequently faced by most people, that were both difficult and important. The aim was to study how such problems had been dealt with to produce successful outcomes, and contrast these observations with processes that had led to disappointment. The purpose was to uncover patterns of thinking behavior and associated questions which might offer some kind of map or wiring diagram to show how to address any issue effectively.

The other track concerned the Person who had to deal with such demanding Tasks: how did he or she think? How could anyone tell the approach most likely to succeed in solving a problem, making a decision, handling the future, or getting the best out of other people? What mental resources did every person have at their disposal,. For the research team, the thrust here was linguistic. By reverse-engineering large numbers of typical words and phrases, it was possible to divine how they came into common use, what different words and phrases had in common, and, by so doing, uncover their underlying intention. This approach uncovered systematic patterns of questions that are typical of each Thunk. The group were trying to uncover the concepts that represented thought, and, by severely restricting their number, to identify those that were fundamental and form an analytic model of the brain.

6a) Tools: What they do and why they were developed.

The research focused on tools as a means of transfer: making the research results available to the workplace. These discoveries had to be demonstrated in ways readily learnable by a wide range of employees, at every level, in every business function and culture. For managers wanting to enhance performance, of themselves and of others, learnability was the paramount need. As such, the most direct way to learn would be to connect with their own problem-solving concerns.

The system to bridge and align an individual and his or her difficulties is a conceptual toolkit, which is explained in Jerry Rhodes' book, *Conceptual Toolmaking* (1991) Blackwell.

Amongst the criteria for the conceptual tools to be developed were the following:-
* The resulting tool-kit should possess simplicity, clarity and integrity

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[4] Rhodes, Jerry (1991) *Conceptual Toolmaking*, p 237-241
[5] Rhodes, Jerry (1991) *Conceptual Toolmaking*, p 54

- It should be inviting and appealing to experienced and junior managers alike
- The tools must be easy for managers to learn
- They should make a recognizable difference to a manager's effectiveness on the job in real-time
- The tools must be generic, so that they can be used by everyone in any circumstance, yet specific enough to be useful in depth[6]

The Philips team took on the challenge to condense the universe of thought into a model based on only 25 basic thinking operations. Successful task process activities that gradually formed into thinking 'maps' were used to test and improve this analysis of mind. In turn, those 25 concepts could be recognized in the maps and were used to help improve them.

After 4 years, this research was deemed to have met its goals and the Deva Project was ended. This was the beginning of more than thirty years of ongoing action research by Rhodes through working with client organisations to help them meet their objectives. A further example of this joint development was with Dunlop in 1983-4 who originally commissioned an inventory for assessing staff which became Rhodes' Thinking-Intentions Profile and has been the most adopted way into Effective Intelligence.
Experience of Effective Intelligence by other organizations, has multiplied since 1985 by companies selecting their own staff to become trained, qualified and licensed by Rhodes. Subsequently, The Centre for Effective Intelligence has licensed independent consultancies, some of which have been authorized to qualify their own sub-licensees. Continuous technology transfer to organisations is enhanced by their contributions whilst learning, and has enriched the sources and output of research over the years.

The model and many tools of Effective Intelligence have been used by organizations and people around the world, predominantly in Canada, the United States, Europe and the Far East.

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[6] Rhodes, Jerry. (1991) *Conceptual Toolmaking*, pp 56-57

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