



Towards the 21st Century

by
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IN THIS WEEK'S HRI-POST CO-OPERATION COLUMN, Dr. Chira reflects on the May 1995 political crisis and the relevance of various human resources and sociological paradoxes. He also applauds the Civil Service Commission's decision to experiment with re-engineering and offers some advice.

May 1992. At that time the country was in crisis. Now it is May 1995, and we are in another crisis, although this time it is of a different nature.

Just 3 years ago, in May 1992, the people came out onto the streets to fight against an apparent monopoly of power by the military. Remembering those days, I would like to convey my respect to the people who fought with integrity, to the injured and to the relatives of those who died.

Although only 3 short years have passed, so much has changed. The Democrat Party which was the largest party after the election that was prompted by the May 1992 crisis, now faces a major crisis of confidence. However, this time the power of the military is not a factor and the political situation has changed. Now people expect politicians to be respectable and work towards bearing fruits for the people.

These contrasting events pose a paradox. Developments are moving in different directions from the same origin. On the one hand we have achieved fairly successful economic growth, and on the other hand a lot of people have not benefited from it. The majority of Thai people are still poor and our human resources indicators are the lowest in ASEAN. We can therefore call this a 'growth and distribution paradox'.

Another paradox is that despite political difficulties, we still survive very well by international standards. There is a lot of energy, creativity and excellence in the private sector, and all the time more people are attracted by the excitement and get involved. But while the private sector talks a lot about competition, excellence, quality and customer satisfaction, in the bureaucracy all you see is despair, loss of confidence, low quality, declining morale, and energy that just seems to disappear. To me this is a paradox of efficiency.

Yet another paradox as I see it, is that society gives a lot of attention to listening to politicians talking about short sighted concerns and long term plans which they never accomplish. Meanwhile academics and NGO's try to focus attention on what can be done to achieve long term benefits for our society. This is Thailand's biggest paradox. If you think about it carefully, things which strike you as being important always turn out to be fading hopes and dreams.

Nevertheless, despite all these paradoxes, I believe we should continue to move forward as best we can. I have been thinking about what Thailand might look like in May 2005 and asking myself what kind of society we will be living in. We must try our best to contribute to society and learn how to put our energy and efforts to good use.

This week, I read the news with some excitement that the Civil Service Commission is launching pilot projects to begin experimentation with re-engineering certain government departments. I would like to encourage and support this idea. However, I do hope that the Civil Service Commission's efforts under the leadership of Deputy Secretary-General Mrs. Dhipawattana Weerasawan will not only be practical but will also have a real vision for change.

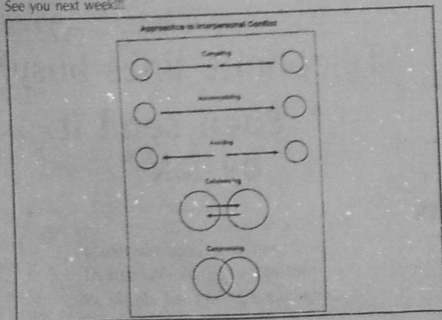
If I may, I would like to suggest a few things which I think will help to ensure the project's success:

- Measure the results empirically, such as by comparing costs, quality and cycle times of processes before and after re-engineering.
- If the work process improves, what kind of substantial incentives are to be offered to those who are successful in implementing the re-engineering? For instance, would the departments concerned be allowed to adopt their own pay for performance criteria?
- Think carefully about how you can change the behaviour and attitudes of those who resist the changes.

One of the biggest worries about re-engineering in government departments is whether the top leaders are committed to the idea, and whether they themselves have the courage to change. Under present conditions, I doubt very much that this is the case. Nevertheless, it is important to monitor what happens closely.

I think the reform of our bureaucracy should not be based on suggestions and ideas proposed by some foreign consultant or other, but that we should try to link our vision with the actual situation in each department, especially with reference to the 'organizational culture,' and even link it to each decision and especially the leadership issue.

See you next week!!!



improvement? A program of student Accounting and Social Skills.

DEFINITION
Interpretation? We have reacted to the situation. All of us know what to do. What happens next?

1.0
One of the available ideas is to open a forum for your opinion. Begin to discuss the human resources terms. Remember your and begin to try. For your own language.

2. B
Research under age drift of time. Firmly believe. See are has been. The book will appear.