How to Accomplish a Mission - a 'general' system

Contents
(hyperlinked documents – click on the underlined colored links to go to the specific section)

How to Accomplish a Mission - a 'general' system

A Few Simple Steps:

1. **Identify the Mission as clearly as possible.** Call it **"M".** Check out whether the Mission is likely to be accomplished in the conventional way or whether there are likely to be any difficulties in accomplishing it. In the following, we describe a powerful step-by-step process that can help an individual or a group to accomplish any Mission that may be difficult or impossible to accomplish in the conventional way. This process also helps in the accomplishment of any Mission with significantly higher effectiveness than is possible than through the 'conventional processes'.

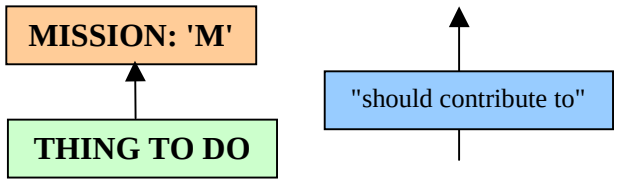
   On identifying the Mission to an adequate level of agreement, what the individual or the group has to do is essentially two things:

   a) Do all the things that may "contribute to" or " help accomplish the Mission
   b) Overcome all the barriers /difficulties / threats that may hinder or prevent accomplishment of the Mission.

   The ***OPMS*** approach is a practicall means to enable the above two steps to be effectively done. Check out: "***OPMS* - Outline"** for some descriptive background about ***OPMS,*** including various Missions on which it has been/is being used**.** The next steps, below, provide a quick outline of the process involved. Check out **"*OPMS* - Major steps involved in creating"** for some more detail on this.

2. Respond to the **'1st Fundamental Trigger Question': "What, in your opinion, are the THINGS TO DO to accomplish 'M' ?"**

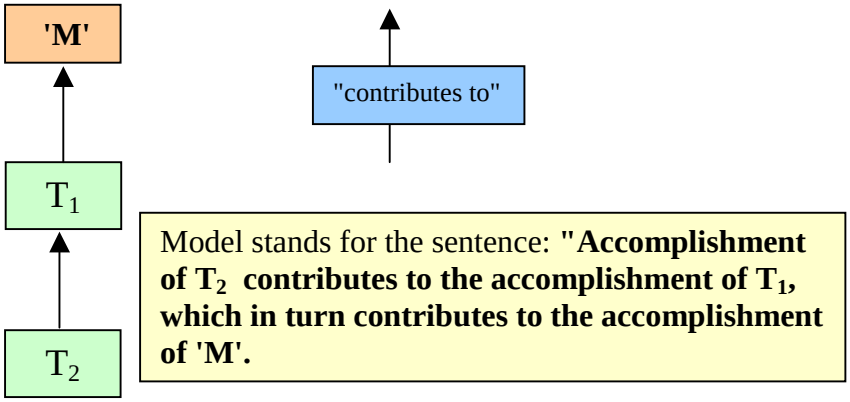
3. In general, one would identify many THINGS TO DO to accomplish the Mission. However, to illustrate the process, let's assume for the moment that there is only **one** THING TO DO to accomplish the Mission. Then the "contribution model" would be as illustrated below, where the arrow stands for **"contributes to"** (accomplishment of):



   The model above stands for the sentence: **"Accomplishment of 'THING TO DO' should contribute to accomplishment of 'M'." (**This kind of model, composed of 'intentions' linked with the transitive verb "contributes to", is called an "Intent Structure").

4. If the above model is accurate, and if 'M' has not yet been accomplished satisfactorily, then one may, for the moment, simply forget about 'M' itself and work instead towards accomplishing the THING TO DO that will help accomplish 'M'! The idea, in general, is that one only has to work on accomplishing the activities (or THINGS TO DO) that would help accomplish the Mission. (Users may check out the logic of this argument with any simple goal or objective)**.**

5. Further to clarify the point made at 4 above, suppose now that there are **two** (and only two) THINGS TO DO, the accomplishment of which would help to accomplish 'M'. Let's call them T_1 and T_2**.** Let us suppose that the accomplishment of THING TO DO T_2 contributes to the accomplishment of T_1**.** Then the model representing this situation would be as appears below:



6. Exactly as explained at No 4 above, the moment the above model is ready **and found acceptable**, one could then forget (for the moment) entirely about 'M' and T_1, and just focus on the accomplishment of T_2**! As one works towards accomplishment of T_2, one is actually performing an activity that would in due course contribute to the accomplishment of T_1, which would, as it is accomplished, contribute in turn to the accomplishment of 'M'!! Because "*contributes to*" is a *transitive relationship*, it turns out that, for larger models one only has to ask a small part of the total number of questions to resolve the entire structure. Transitivity is the following important property:**
If 'A' → 'B' *and* 'B' → 'C' *then* 'A' MUST → 'C', where 'A', 'B' and 'C' represent factors for modeling and '→' represents a transitive relationship.

The above logic works perfectly whether one has just 2 THINGS TO DO, or 20, or 200, or as many as 2,000 or 2,000,000 THINGS TO DO! Whatever it might be that one wants to accomplish, all that is actually needed on the ground is to work towards the accomplishment of THINGS TO DO that would contribute to the accomplishment of the desired goal. When we have this process of ISM installed, we then need to focus on just a few of them at our 'current level'. (User should check out this logic with a variety of simple goals or objectives to be convinced that it really is true!)

The process shown would enable one to identify a few elements that

"**contribute to"** a whole hierarchy of elements ***contributing to*** the Mission. We thus have to think about only the few elements on which we are currently focussing - in the full confidence that what we're now doing will help us accomplish the Mission.

7. We illustrate the above logic on the following pages with a few 'simple' models of well-understood 'small' and 'simple' goals (and some explanation about this process).

Some Illustrative Models:

- "Writing a Letter";
- "Enhancing my Personal Effectiveness";
- "Getting up from this chair to sit on another"
- "To ensure the organisation XYZ becomes profitable in 1 year's time".

(**Note** – only first two models **"Writing a Letter"** and **"Enhancing my personal effectiveness"** are now provided in this document – please let us know if you would like to see models on any of the other issues).
If you feel that any of the above 'Missions' are trivial, do please remember that they are certainly NOT trivial for someone who has not yet acquired the skills that "**contribute to"** that Mission! (In fact, I am certain that each of us once upon a time spent a lot of time and effort learning how to stand up and to walk from Point A to Point B - thus, at that time long ago, this simple thing we have since mastered was certainly not trivial to us. Further, who amongst us would claim we would NOT like "to enhance personal effectiveness" ?).

We would all agree that the Mission of **"sending up and bringing back a space shuttle safely"** is certainly 'non-trivial'. However, NASA had accomplished it successfully so often that it had become almost trivial to that great engineering organization: it was apparently believed in-house that such a Mission had been entirely mastered. Until suddenly it was discovered, during Columbia's last tragic flight, that the systems designed had not encompassed all the potential variety inherent in the complex set of problems they were trying to resolve through their systems! The ***OPMS*** approach is designed, as a whole, precisely to help us ensure that the variety

of the systems we create could come to match the variety of the problem space.

8. **Now check through the note titled: "Major Steps in Creating an OPMS", in order to understand the *OPMS* approach as a comprehensive system to accomplish any Mission of interest!**

On the next couple of pages, we provide a couple of 'Interpretive Structural Models' on the following Missions:

- **"Writing a Letter";**
- **"Enhancing my Personal Effectiveness".**

The above are, obviously, 'personal' Missions, applicable to 'individuals'. Any 'group Mission', such as the very ambitious one confronted by Greenleap members, will obviously contain a significant further level of complexity beyond that illustrated in the two models herewith - the complexity of differences of perceptions and opinions of people involved in the Mission. We shall demonstrate, while working on the Mission, how consensus may be arrived at in such complex situations.

The 'individual' models below are provided as example only, and no claim is made that they are unique - many other models could be made to achieve to accomplish each of the Missions.

In respect to the 'Greenleap' Mission, we shall be showing how such models could be created by the members of the group, in consensus, which could be developed as an Action Plan, which in due course Would include considerations like "WHO?", "HOW MUCH?", "WHEN", and so on, as appropriate.

The following documentation should be useful at this point:
- ***OPMS*** - Outline
- ***OPMS*** - Major steps involved in creating
- "The Power of the Word"

Next pages - models on:

- "Writing a Letter";
- "Enhancing my Personal Effectiveness".

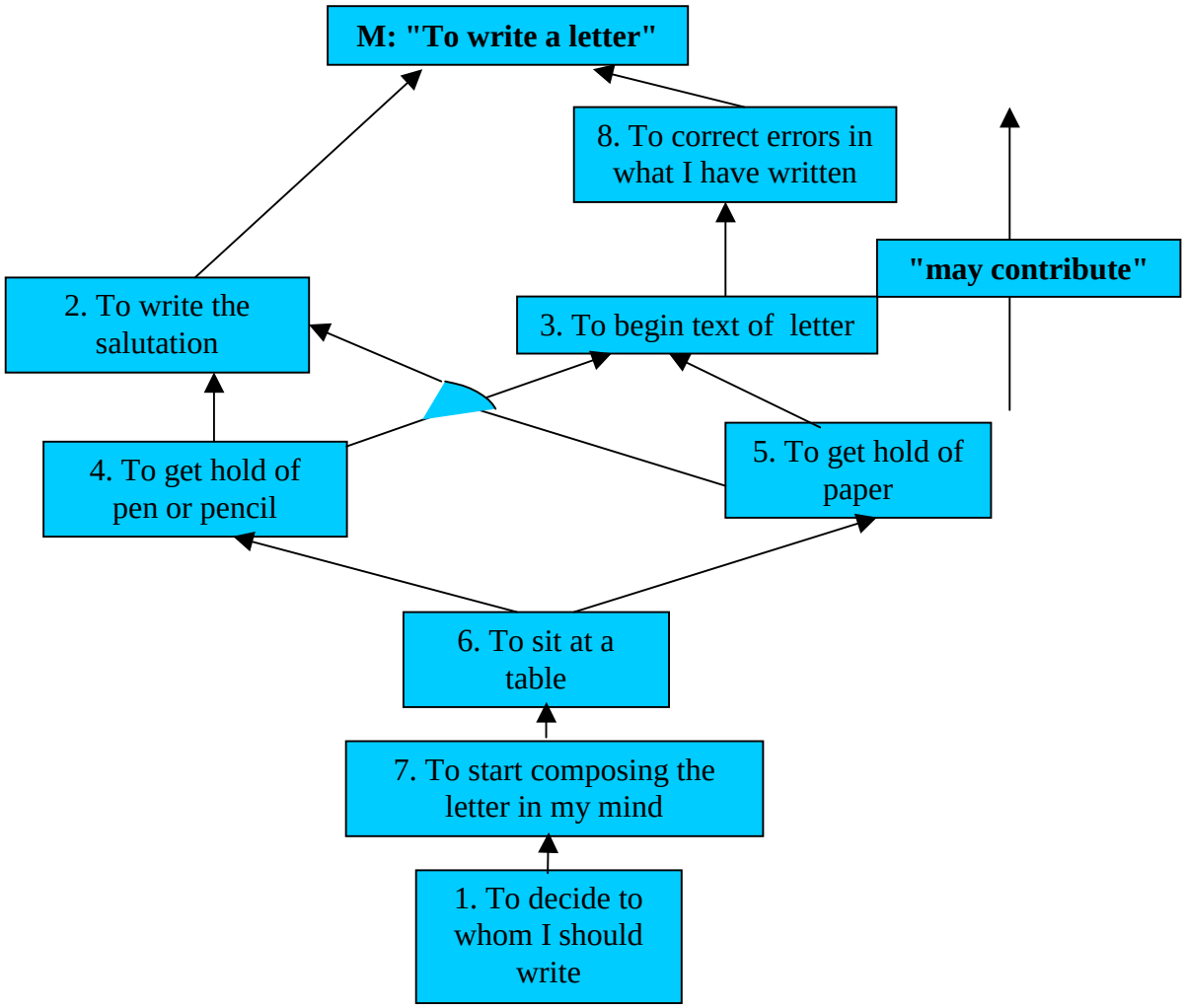
"Writing a Letter"

Some elements contributing to the Mission "To write a letter" (Provided purely as an example of how the modeling process involved in creating an Action Plan is initiated. Both the 'elements' and the models constructed from the elements will depend on the individual or the group constructing them).

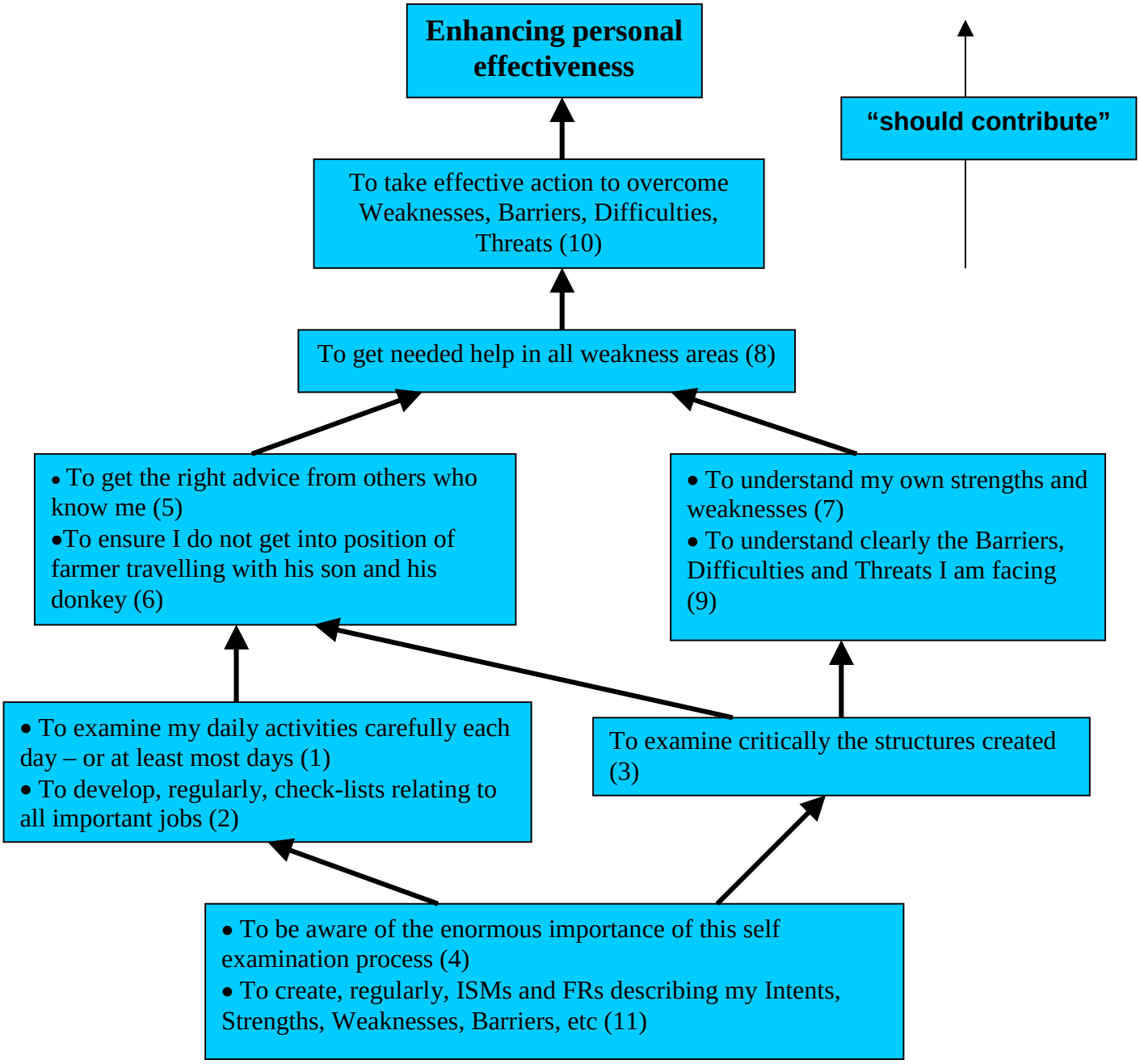
1. To decide to whom I should write
2. To write the salutation
3. To begin text of letter
4. To get hold of a pen or pencil
5. To get hold of paper
6. To sit at a table
7. To start composing the letter in my mind
8. To correct errors in what I have written

"Writing a Letter - structure of Mission as an *ISM*"

(read bottom-upwards, substituting "should contribute" on encountering an arrow)



"Enhancing my personal effectiveness at what I do" This is a model I keep working on from time to time, whenever I feel the inclination to do it (roughly once every month or so). I have tried, in this version, to keep the elements as 'general' as possible, so that it would be of interest to others (and also so that I do not give away information about my personal deficiencies!) **[As usual, read bottom-upwards in direction of arrows, substituting "should contribute" en encountering an arrow]**



"Interactive Management" (and ***OPMS***)

The renowned systems scientist Professor John N. Warfield has designed a powerful process of group problem solving in conditions of situational complexity, called "Interactive Management", which is comprised of tools to enable groups to:

- **Generate and clarify** ideas through focussing by way of 'trigger questions;
- **'Structure'** (or organise) ideas generated in terms of relationships that are appropriate in the system under consideration. This structuring is accomplished through two powerful modeling tools **Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM),** and **Field Representation (FR) Method.** ISM enables organising ideas by way of appropriate "transitive relationships" in systems; FR enables classifying of ideas into appropriate 'similarity classes' or 'categories' (ignoring any pre-existing frameworks in the mind).

Warfield's **ISM**, illustrated above, along with **FR** (not explained in this brief note), provide the 'technology' required for us to cope, with a relatively high degree of confidence, with all the complexities that systems may involve. Effective means of handling 'behavioral issues' contained in systems are built into the 'idea generation' processes in Interactive Management. Further, such behavioral issues are also built into the way ISMs and FRs are created – through informed consensus about relationships between factors in the system, arrived at through open debate between the people involved in the system.

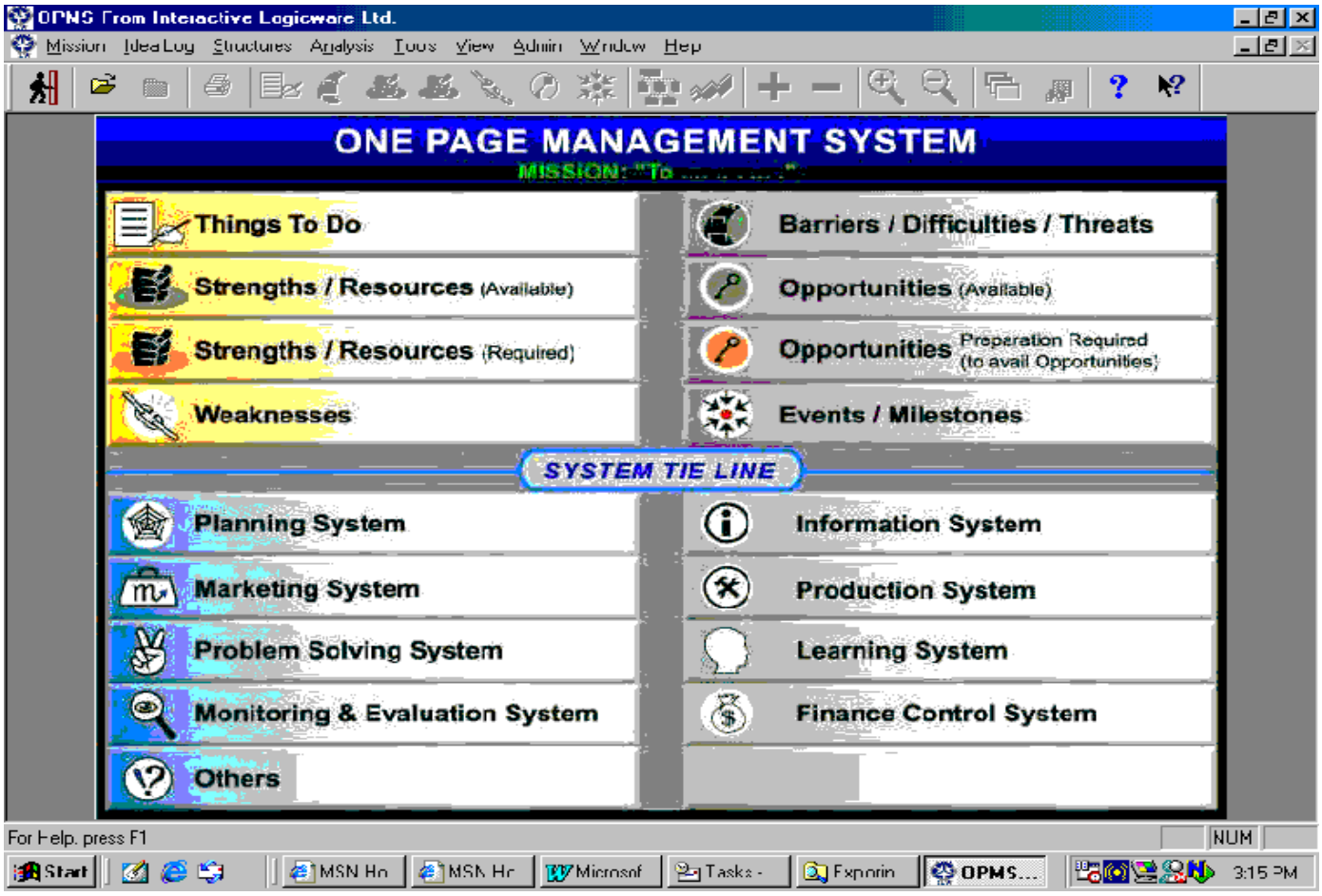
The ***OPMS*** approach adds to Interactive Management an 'integration' of all the models built by the people involved in the system, by creating a Field Representation linking up all relevant Dimensions during progress towards the Mission. The ***OPMS,*** as illustrated on page 9, is a **'model of models'** comprising of all the lists and all the models built by the problem solving individual or group during progress towards any Mission. Each 'element' in the ***OPMS*** (namely, the Dimensions within it) is a pointer to the detailed lists and models relating to the 'system Mission'. The ***OPMS*** enables highly effective planning and implementation work to be carried out in support of ***any*** Mission of interest to individuals and to groups.

***

Interactive LogicWare Ltd
c/o La Multi Infosystems Ltd
Road No. 2 (Annapurna Studios Lane)
Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, INDIA
Tel.: +91-40-5557 3328, 5557 3329
Camp: Mumbai
c/o Sahi Oretrans Pvt Ltd
30 Western India House, Sir P.M. Road, Fort
Mumbai - 400 001, INDIA
Tel.: +91-22-2281 0033 (7 lines)
Contact: G.S. Chandy (chandygs@hotmail.com)

… next page - a picture of the ***OPMS***

A picture of the *OPMS*:



Each of the 'Dimensions' illustrated above ("THINGS TO DO", etc) is a 'pointer' to the 'elements' and the models built from them. Elements in models in different dimensions are linked appropriately to elements in other dimensions. E.g. Elements in models in the 'BARRIERS' Dimension would be linked by way of the relationships "hinders" or "prevents accomplishment of" to the THINGS TO DO. Further, the process enables us to identify specifically what further THINGS TO DO would help us overcome the BARRIERS identified.

These elements and models in the ***OPMS*** provide a comprehensive 'relational network picture' of the entire 'system' we design to accomplish the identified Mission whatever it may be.

***