

Organisational Culture as a Barrier to e-Government

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Introduction

- Project overview - Breaking Barriers to e-Government
- Organisational culture as a barrier to e-government
 - **Different organisational cultures....**
 - Hierarchalism
 - Fatalism
 - Egalitarianism
 - Individualism
 - **...have different 'technological myths'**
 1. technology perverse/intolerant
 2. technology capricious
 3. technology benign
 4. technology ephemeral

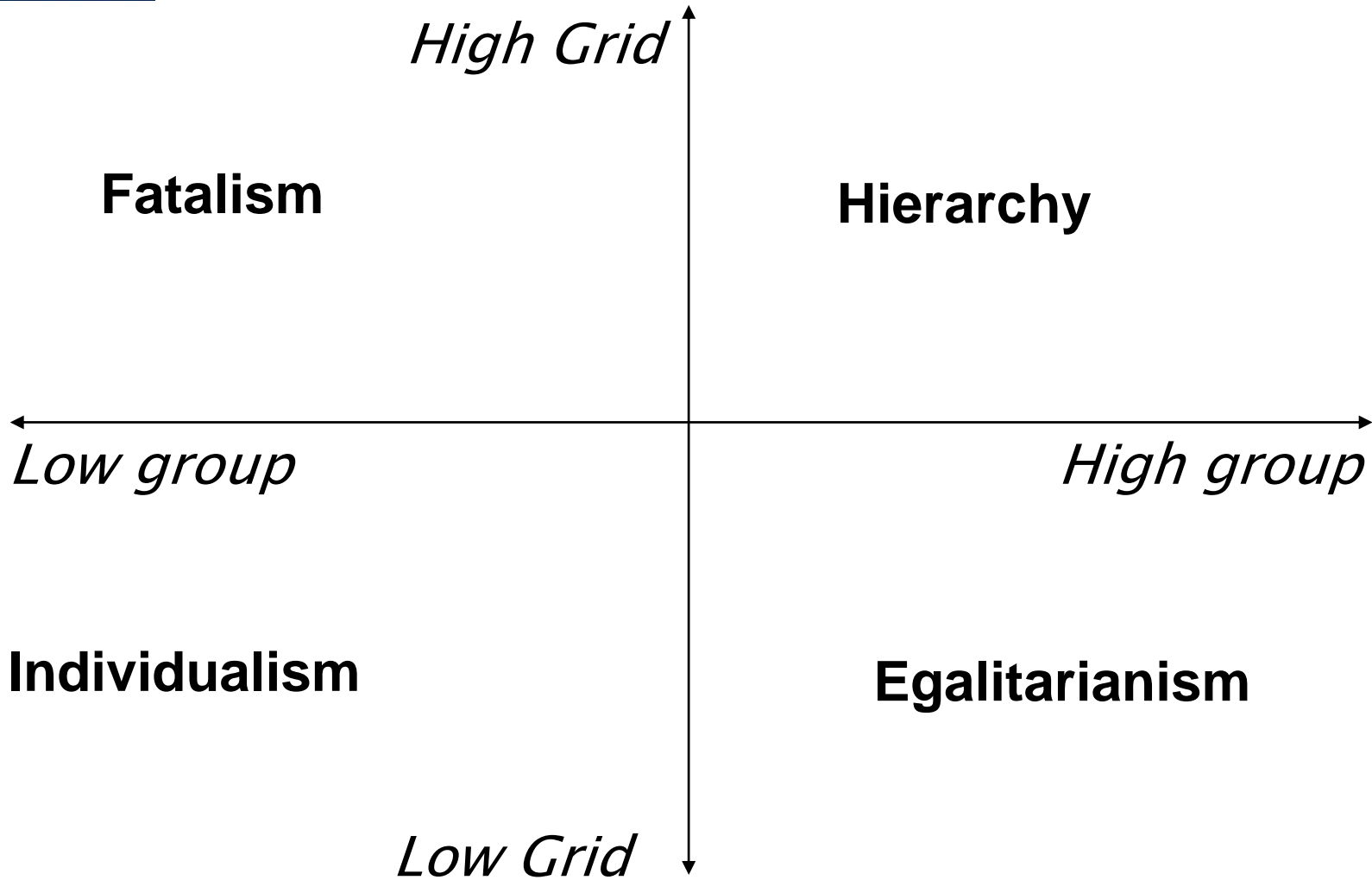
(Mary Douglas and followers)

*(Margetts and Dunleavy, 2002 building on
Thompson et al. 1990)*



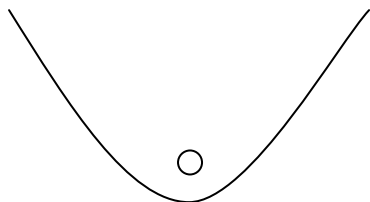


Cultural Types – Four ‘Ways of Life’

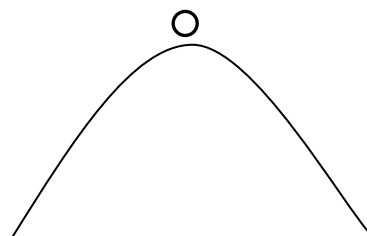




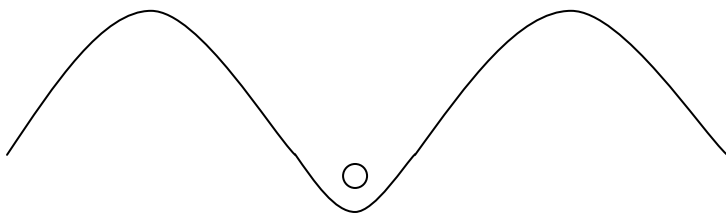
Four 'myths' of technology



Technology Benign



Technology Ephemeral



Technology Perverse/Tolerant



Technology Capricious





The technology perverse / tolerant myth

- Technology is mostly forgiving ...
 - ...but vulnerable to occasional knocking of ball over rim
 - Managing institution must regulate, control, co-ordinate (proactive but not 'unbridled experimentation')
 - Technological experts are vital
- +ve**
- careful/cautious/planned approach
- ve**
- over-reliance on experts ('hands-off' approach)
 - 'control mentality' works against benefits of Internet (eg. over-planning)

Examples

Central government portals and intranets, e.g., UK





The technology capricious myth

- Technology world is unforgiving.....
 - ...a random world - where the ball may slide to anywhere.
- ve**
- No capacity to manage or learn: just cope with erratic events
 - Pessimistic view of what citizens can/will do
- +ve**
- Can miss out expensive intermediary steps in technological innovation (cutting edge versus bleeding edge)
 - Avoid instrumental approach to technology

Examples

Transition countries





The technology benign myth

- Belief that best outcome will always be achieved
- Trial and error encouraged

+ve:

- Appropriate approach with web-based technologies
- Innovation and risk taking welcomed
- Organisation learns through experimentation

-ve:

- Over enthusiasm and lack of care

Examples

Australia





The technology ephemeral myth

- Overly cautious
- Resist large scale, inter-related technological innovations
- Use technology in modest, decentralised ways

+ve:

- Will not invest in every technological whim
- Works against large-scale high risk projects

-ve:

- Inaction works against innovation
- Lack of infrastructure

Examples

Environmental organisations, Netherlands?





Cultural change to overcome barriers to e-Government

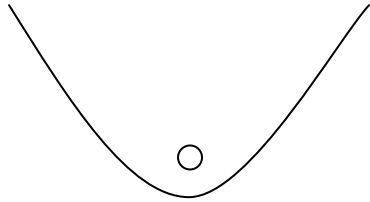
- Identifying cultures – and thereby myths – reveals organisational barriers to e-government
- Which may be overcome by targeted shifts up or down ‘grid’ or ‘group’
- Thereby facilitating change process
- Identifying barriers at EU level

Ideas for cases welcomed

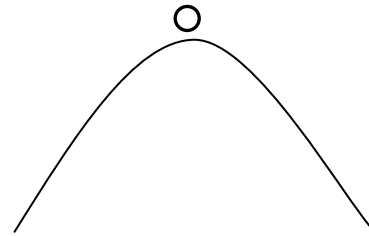
- Website <http://www.egovbarriers.org>



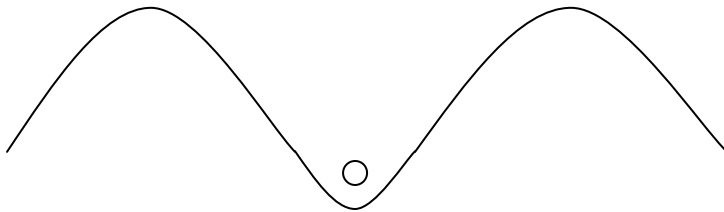
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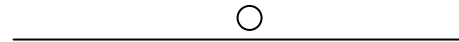
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