

How Council X can avoid turning into down town Baghdad while implementing the new Customer Relationship Management System (CRMS).

The implementation of new technology can create emotional havoc amongst normal non-techno humans. In fact we must take this into account, and take responsibility for minimising this crippling situation.

At present most IT solutions have little point of difference. Solutions offered by one company are much the same as the next in terms of equipment and price.

To put it simply, they only do half the job. The commonly held belief amongst these companies is that they are working in the T (Technology) industry. They have forgotten about the (I) Information, and most importantly of all, they actively avoid the reason for their existence – PEOPLE.

People are at the heart of all organisations. For the most part they are ignored. Council X may have created a small team to aid with the implementation of the CRMS, however the average employee will usually find out about the CRMS implementation through the ubiquitous organisational grape vine. It is here within the grapevine that fact and fiction merge where rumour and counter rumour are created and where conspirators plan terrorist actions against the council.

Who are these terrorists? They are ordinary employees of the council driven to extra-ordinary acts by the most potent motivator of all – FEAR.

And what causes this fear? Disempowerment, technophobia and a strong sense that the new technology will in some way diminish them as a valuable member of the team (real or imagined). But worst of all, a new system will highlight their complete technological inadequacy.

Imagine this: you are 48 years old and have worked at Council X for the past 30 years. You survived amalgamation, compulsory competitive tendering; downsizing; budget cuts; a new politically correct culture; and the loss of your personal assistant/secretary. You are the main breadwinner at home on band 6 or 7 wages. Your partner works part time, but the income wouldn't come close to meeting the important daily expenses and children's education.

For many years you have coped with all of this admirably, but now there's a whole new IT system going in at the office /site . You will be unmasked, exposed, stripped to the core. Why? Because you are a technophobe, who as a manager has had little or no accountability to the rest of the organisation, calls came into the department and the jobs were undertaken in your time frame with varying results and resident satisfaction.

Up until now you've been getting by using the templates left by your now redundant assistant and by asking for help from that really nice young girl in your department every time you get stuck. Not any more. Moves are afoot to revamp the whole system. Out with the old and in with the new.

You have gathered from the office gossip (the only source of available information as IT consultants do not speak English, they speak techno babble), that two hours training per person has been budgeted for. And the training is to take place in mixed groups (all bands) of 20 people at a time. After all, how hard can it be? It's apparently a simple system to use.

You will do whatever it takes to protect yourself and your family, because if they find out how inadequate you are, you've had it. Finished, washed up, on the scrap heap. You'll have to pull your youngest out of private school, stop supporting the other two at university, give up the holiday home, sell your beloved boat and ask your partner to take extra shifts at that horrible call centre because, let's face it, who is going to employ a 48 year old luddite? No one, that's who!

It's a simple choice. Fight or die. If you are going down, you are going to take the whole place with you. You are now a bona fide **Organisational Terrorist**.

Your first weapon as an organisational terrorist is to attend (and coerce others to attend) every meeting to prove your department or site does not need this new CRMS thing anyway. The sabotage process is underway.

Your road side bomb is to spread misinformation, "this is big brother, it's all about monitoring us, so they can cut staff", the customer service manager is a power hungry new comer, etc, etc this action is designed to gain your co-workers support to help you in your fight until it gets placed in the too hard basket and goes away, after all you've done this many times before and each time the directorate have either changed thanks to their three year contracts or given up, you have real proof that this strategy works. As a long term member of staff and as a manager you have the power to incite others to rebel right along with you, either by gentle persuasion or by bully tactics, fear of being ostracised by your co workers can be a powerful tool

If the above fails, your final WMD (weapon of mass destruction) is to plan a strategy that will ensure everyone in your department or site works in unison to crash the test system. This will include refusing to carry out essential tasks related to the CRMS.

The above scenario may seem ridiculous, but it happens in all sorts of forms. So the question is, how can the city of X avoid turning into downtown Baghdad as you move through this technological and cultural change?

The answer is Indigo Training. We will guide and train each person through the technological change, in a way that they can not only understand, but in a way which will encourage every individual within the organisation to not only accept the new Technologies but to embrace the new CRMS in a positive and creative manor. Without this assistance the project will over run and budgets will blow out, stress leave will rise and productivity will drop dramatically, not to mention the culture of the organisation will be seriously compromised.

Indigo will aid Council X's CRMS to be delivered on time and on budget (organisational terrorism and sabotage will be significantly reduced if not completely eradicated).

Council X will be held up as the example on how a large organisation, can introduce a Customer Relationship Management System with the minimum of disruption and angst.